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The ARYAN PATH

Vol. VIII. SEPTEMBER 1937 No. 9.

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THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

THIS monthly publication of 16 pages blends the past and the present by reprinting old articles from H. P. B.'s *Theosophist* and *Lucifer*, and W. Q. Judge's *Path*, as well as throwing the light of Theosophy on modern events. All articles are of practical interest.

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A Very Wonderful Flower
A Bone that Scared a Knight
A Persisting Ghost
A Night of Many Wonders
The Status of Jesus
Feel for the Cause
H.P.B. and Reincarnation—"The Cycle Moveth"—"Isis Unveiled"
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Point out the "Way"—however dimly,
and lost among the host—as does the evening
star to those who tread their path in darkness.
—*The Voice of the Silence*

THE ARYAN PATH

VOL. VIII SEPTEMBER 1937 No. 9

THE COMMUNITY OF SPIRITS

Whoever writes, whoever reads, of spirits and spiritism miscalled spiritualism has instant and continuous need of true perspective—has to take and hold to the synthetic, the universal point of view. This is not easy, but it is easy to try. Nor is it so difficult as might appear, once the nature of the obstacle to genuine "clairvoyance" is itself perceived.

What is nowadays called Occultism, however misrepresented and misunderstood by its professed votaries, does none the less underlie every religion, every science, every philosophy of our own as of all former periods. The two great works of Madame Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine*, require but to be approached and studied with the same attention as the doctor of theology, the professor of science, the philosopher of the schools bestow upon their several pursuits, for their *valence* in the world of Ideas to be recognized and availed of by our generation. Surely it is the part of wisdom to reject nothing *a priori* which offers "light in dark places."

In sober truth such terms as religion, science, philosophy, and many similar ones, have no genuine validity because they neither designate nor identify anything but the changing phases of human consciousness. At best they are but names for forms of thought as little definite as clouds. The words survive from generation to generation, but their content never remains unchanged for an instant, even in the most ignorant or narrow-minded individual. Ideas, erroneous as well as true, remain stable quantities so long as ignorance and knowledge both exist in man, but the human mind, like the human body, is subject to what the ancients called *Nitya-pralaya*. As with other statements of principles, elements, and their combinations and dissolutions under Karma, it is difficult indeed to render the accurate scientific nomenclature of Occult metaphysics and psychology into intelligible English. *Nitya-pralaya* is often translated "atomic change," but these two words themselves have to be given an imported meaning, for neither "atom" nor "change" means in true Occultism our understanding of

or reaction to these expressions. An "atom" is a centre of conscious perception and action, an entity, a Being, a Soul in one or another stage of ever-becoming manifested Life. Thus the whole Universe, visible and invisible, tangible and intangible to us, is a world of Life and "lives". Thence it becomes unavoidable that there is no action or change (Karma) unless there is a being to cause it, and to feel its effects. These primary and indestructible Units of Life form endless combinations among themselves, combinations incessantly varying, and it is to these spiritual, physical, psychical, intellectual combinations that we apply our notions of "creation", "evolution", "birth", "death", and the like.

Almost within the current calendar year "science" is at the point of collapse of its whole edifice of theories as to "law", "matter", "force", etc., because of the mathematics of Einstein and others, and because of the physical behaviour of what are christened with newly-baptismal names at the altar of science—electrons, protons, neutrons, what not. The reader may well refer to an article published in last February's ARYAN PATH and entitled "Science Yields to Mysticism." The writer of the contribution is Mr. Waldemar Kaempffert, scientific editor and author, one of the most careful, informed, and intelligent of observers. Speaking of the "new revelations about the atom" in the scientific world, Mr. Kaempffert writes :

> Electrons leap from one orbit to another as if they have a will of their own. No one can tell what an individual electron may be doing at any given moment. It has to be treated statistically, just as life-insurance actuaries treat thousands of human beings statistically in order to compile their life tables. The actuaries cannot tell when any particular man of a group will die, but they can talk about the average life of the group. The physicist can tell nothing about the individual electron in an atom, but he can tell what the average electron is doing.

His insight as well as the facts discussed entitles Mr. Kaempffert's article to the most thoughtful consideration. Both his facts and his intuitions may then well be pondered in the light of some comparable statements made by Madame Blavatsky :

> ...Cosmic dust is something more; for every atom in the Universe has the potentiality of self-consciousness in it, and is, like the monads of Leibnitz, a Universe in itself, and *for* itself. *It is an atom and an angel.*
>
> ...Occultism teaches that (*a*) the life-atoms of our life-principle are never entirely lost when a man dies. That the atoms best impregnated with the life-principle (an independent, eternal, conscious factor) are partially transmitted from father to son by heredity, and partially are drawn once more together and become the animating principle of the new body in every incarnation of the Egos. Because (*b*) as the individual *Soul* is ever the same, so are the atoms of the lower principles (body, its astral, or *life-double*, etc.), drawn as they are by affinity and Karmic law always to the same individuality in a series of various bodies.

Just as no single atom of the body is independent of the rest, just as no single idea exists in isolation from the mind, so no man lives or can live for himself alone. Nor can any party, any sect, any division of mankind endure at the expense of the other organs and elements of the body

politic. These are platitudes, of which everyone is well aware, many will reply—as if irresponsible *congé* to the truth carried with it some immunity, some estoppel of the reign of law in everything and in every circumstance. All this is but the *laisser faire, laisser aller* which is the fatal inner voice to which the great middle class as well as the leaders of mankind are all too prone to listen.

Carry the analogy one step further. No kingdom in all Nature but is a kingdom of Spirit and spirits, mutually interactive, mutually beneficent or maleficent. Charles Darwin, who is remembered only in connection with the tortuous doctrine of "Evolution"—Charles Darwin has shown that, without the humble earthworm, nor plant, nor animal, nor man could live upon this globe. Whether we will or no, "communication with spirits" goes on incessantly, for this Universe is a community of Spirits.

Madame Blavatsky is at judicial care in her two great treatises to buttress her every theorem of Occultism with evidence drawn, not only from ancient teachings sacred and profane, but from the testimony of modern science, theology and philosophy. All too often have her teachings been denied even a "preliminary hearing" by those otherwise best qualified to profit by them, on the gratuitous assumptions that she is "opposed" to modern progress and culture, or that she, like so many others, is seeking "followers" and "believers" instead of serious *students*, or that, again, she is a mere visionary or charlatan. Are they wise who thus disdain the injunction, *audi alteram partem*—hear the other side before deciding? In this respect, even the most cursory examination of her writings will quickly disclose that she herself at all times set an emulable example in her consideration of the most opposing views. Can any really reflective mind accept the various notions of miracle, chance, accident, luck, as an *explanation* of the unaccountable facts of human life? Of course not. For an adequate comprehension of the subject it is necessary to posit a brief statement of those tenets of the Wisdom-Religion or Hermetic philosophy which each succeeding Messenger of the anciently universal Teaching repeats, and which every disciple of whatever degree repeats in his place for those who may care to listen, and to learn.

Such a restatement may perhaps assist that reflective mind to identify their presence, explicit or implied, in his own system of faith, for these fundamental ideas are in fact contained—though too often under a misleading guise—in every religion or philosophy worthy of the name.

For clarity's sake, no less than for justice's sake, the following numbered statements are taken from the writings of H. P. Blavatsky, whose mission and teachings have been dishonoured by some of her followers, whose *bona fides* has been branded with the blackest of unjustice, wittingly in the case of some, unwittingly in the case of most—those who depend upon hearsay for their information, and upon prejudice for their opinion.

I. Everything in the Universe, throughout all its kingdoms, is CONSCIOUS; *i.e.*, endowed with a consciousness of its own kind and on its own plane

of perception. We men must remember that because *we* do not perceive any signs —which we can recognise—of consciousness, say, in stones, we have no right to say that *no consciousness exists there.* There is no such thing as either " dead " or " blind " matter, as there is no "Blind" or " Unconscious " Law. These find no place among the conceptions of Occult philosophy. The latter never stops at surface appearances, and for it the *noumenal* essences have more reality than their objective counterparts.

II. The Universe is worked and *guided* from *within outwards.* We see that every *external* motion, act, gesture, whether voluntary or mechanical, organic or mental, is produced and preceded by *internal* feeling or emotion, will or volition and thought or mind. As no outward motion or change, when normal, in man's external body can take place unless provoked by an inward impulse, given through one of the three functions named, so with the external or manifested Universe. The whole Kosmos is guided, controlled, and animated by almost endless series of Hierarchies of sentient Beings, each having a mission to perform, and who— whether we give them one name or another—are " messengers " in the sense only that they are the agents of Karmic and Cosmic Laws. They vary infinitely in their respective degrees of consciousness and intelligence ; and to call them all pure Spirits without any of the earthly alloy " which time is wont to prey upon " is only to indulge in poetic fancy. For each of these Beings either *was,* or prepares to become, a man, if not in the present, then in a past or a coming cycle. They are *perfected,* when not *incipient,* men ; and differ morally from the terrestrial human beings on their higher (less material) spheres, only in that they are devoid of the feeling of personality and of the *human* emotional nature—two purely earthly characteristics.

III. The whole order of nature evinces a progressive march towards a *higher life.* There is design in the action of the seemingly blindest forces. The whole process of evolution with its endless adaptations is a proof of this. The immutable laws that weed out the weak and feeble species, to make room for the strong, and which ensure the " survival of the fittest," though so cruel in their immediate action—all are working toward the grand end. The very *fact* that adaptations *do* occur, that the fittest *do* survive in the struggle for existence, shows that what is called " unconscious Nature " is in reality an aggregate of forces manipulated by semi-intelligent beings (" Elementals," or psychic embryos), guided by high Intelligences, perfected Spirits, whose collective aggregate forms the manifested world and worlds, and constitutes at one and the same time the Universal MIND and its immutable LAW.

IV. All this results in a perpetual series of physical manifestations and *moral effects* on earth throughout all the stages of any given evolution—the whole being subservient to Karma, collective as well as individual. As that process is not always perfect ; and since, however many proofs it may exhibit of a guiding intelligence behind the veil, it still shows gaps and flaws, and even results very often in evident failures—*therefore,* neither the collective Host of spiritual Beings, nor any of the working powers individually, are proper subjects for divine honours or worship. All *are* entitled to the grateful reverence of Humanity, however—and man ought to be ever striving to help the divine evolution of *Ideas,* by becoming to the best of his ability a *co-worker with nature* in the cyclic task.

THE STORY OF THE PINEAL BODY

NOVA ET VETERA

[Professor C. J. Patten recently retired from the professorship of anatomy at Sheffield University. He was the creator of the unique Department of Anatomy in that University, but his services to science are not confined to splendid technical work ; he is an able popularizer of difficult scientific problems. He is a well-known Craniologist and in the following essay much of his knowledge and experience has been drawn upon.

Those who desire to have the light of the Esoteric Philosophy on this subject will do well to consult *The Secret Doctrine* II. 289 *et seq.*, and also an article on "The Pineal Gland and Morality" in *The Theosophical Movement* for March 1937.—EDS.]

The Pineal Body—mystery of mysteries—known to the ancient Greeks as the conarion (little pine-cone) slumbered for centuries in obscurity until the beginning of the Renaissance ; strange notions which were held in the Middle Ages lingered on ; the brain was still a psychic organ, by many philosophers believed to be the seat of the soul. The ventricles in particular harboured many virtues. When von Soemmerring (1755—1830) held the view that the soul permeated the fluids of the cerebral ventricles, he quoted from the Bible, "And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."

Henry More (1614—1687), one of the many writers of the Renaissance period, visualised the soul as residing in the purer spirits of the fourth ventricle of the hind-brain, while strange to say three centuries B.C. Anaxagoras and Herophilus had maintained that the soul permeated the ventricular fluids of the fore-brain. In times far more remote, 3,000 B.C. the Babylonians practised divination according to the state of the liver in sacrificed animals, for the state of that organ reflected the tempers of the gods ! For a long time the liver was the seat of the soul, the heart and other organs superseding it at a later era, notably throughout the Middle Ages.

With the widening of the horizon of biological knowledge, especially in regard to the structure and function of the brain, it is becoming increasingly difficult to comprehend the manner in which the soul or spirit could possibly take up its abode in the body as a separate entity. Brain mechanism is far more wonderful and comprehensive than ever was dreamt of not so many years back. A blow on the head may change a "Jekyll" into a "Hyde"; a lesion of the brain may transform an individual of lofty ideals into a potential, and should the chance come along, an actual criminal. Numerous other examples might be cited to show that it is the physiological activities of the brain that are at the root of hosts of phenomena at once strange and fascinating, albeit capable of positive demonstration. The destiny and behaviour of the disembodied soul is not a subject with which we are here in the least con-

cerned. The Aryan Path—the Noble Path—is walked by philanthropists of all creeds, who are at liberty to hold their own opinions regarding Immortality. But the theosophists, taking a wide-sweeping view of all that is noble in life, see the mystic and no less the analytical scientist, carrying the torch of knowledge to illuminate their path : both seek close and harmonious correlation between objective and subjective evidence ; both yearn for a sense, (or perhaps the scientist would rather have it, a process) which may dissipate the mists when the human race grows more perfect, a something in the psyche of our being which will reveal the power of thought—perhaps divine —as yet hidden from our sight.

René Descartes (1596—1650) was indubitably a profound philosopher. Indeed, Sigerist writing as recently as 1934 (*Bull. Inst. Hist. Med. Baltimore*), maintained that he influenced medicine, in its widest sense, in a more definite way than any other thinker. Anatomy and physiology interested Descartes mainly in their bearings on the philosophy of the Universe, and he saw the urgent need for an intimate connection between body and soul, or, as the scientist might wish to have it stated, an inseparable union between physiology and psychology. Descartes blazed a trail along which scientists have since gone on their way rejoicing in the foundation of well-equipped laboratories—many now handsomely endowed—for experimental research on " body and soul." The illustrious French philosopher's views on the soul teem with interest. Speaking of it in the abstract he confessed that " we can make many conjectures about the soul and have flattering hopes but no assurance." His views, though based on metaphysics—to him the root of the tree of science—were curiously compounded with more than a spice of mystic materialism. On the one hand he held that the soul is independent of the brain and cognizable only through self-consciousness ; on the other, he enunciated a spiritual indivisible substance actually residing in the Pineal Body, that quaint little stalked appendage of the brain, ruddy in shade, charming to behold, comparable in size and shape to a cherry-stone, or as some anatomists say, a diminutive fir-cone—hence the name pineal.

Nothing was known positively then in regard to the purport of this mysterious little body. Yet curiously enough Galen, Greek physician of the second century, made bold to say that it was a secreting gland, which if his statement be regarded as a prophecy, has come true ! Later, notably in the Middle Ages and extending past the period of the Renaissance, its functions were variously assigned to the control of the flow or to the collecting of the fluids of the brain and spinal cord. Such ideas were in vogue until the beginning of the present century. Another theory arose, namely, that the Pineal Body was a lymphatic gland which passed its secretion on to the third ventricle of the mid-brain, thence to the pituitary body, also a little stalked appendage, but which looked downward toward the base of the brain.

Descartes projected a wonderfully well-thought-out picture of a " rational soul " which whilst it occu-

pied the Pineal Body presided over the whole human frame, regarded by him in the light of an earthly machine ! The subtle animal spirits which permeated the arteries were arrested, stored up and in due course passed on to the ventricles of the fore-brain, and from this second reservoir (walled in by the higher intellectual and moral centres) they were sent through the nerves—then surmised to be hollow tubes—over the body. But should the spirits in the ventricles be uncertain in regard to their distribution the Pineal Body determined their destination by inclining to one or other side of the middle line. Here then we are presented with a soul, not by any means independent of the brain and cognizable only through self-consciousness. For it should be borne in mind that the Pineal Body both anatomically and developmentally is an integral part of the brain itself. Indeed the behaviour of this " rational " Pineal Soul bespeaks physiological activities, and of a truth, as Sir Michael Foster remarked in his *History of Physiology* (1901), if for "the subtle fluid of the animal spirits " we substitute " the molecular changes constituting a nerve impulse " we see that the psycho-physiological views of the famous philosophic anatomist are not fundamentally different from those of our own time.* Proceeding further, it seems as though the Pineal Body, empowered by a "rational soul " to deflect itself from either side of the middle line, might play the part of a sense-organ, with the faculty of direction as its denominator ! And *mirabile dictu,* millions of years ago before man arrived on the scene to probe into such mysteries ; when reptiles represented the summit-level of the animal creation ; the Pineal Body was verily a sense-organ, an eye, definitely equipped with specialised ocular tissues !

Was this fact known to Descartes ? It seems improbable, for his philosophy indicates that he stood aloof from the lower animals, regarding them all as mere automata, devoid of will or sensibility, man alone being endowed with soul, sensation, and free will. If Descartes had only made it his business to investigate the morphology and to correlate the ancestral history of the Pineal Body in lower vertebrates—more especially the ancient types—he might have experienced a thrill : he could have obtained real, objective evidence of something astonishingly strange ; something which might have appealed to the abstruse side of his philosophy ; something uncanny, almost transcendental for the mystic to reflect upon ; in the archetype presentation of the little " cherry-stone " ! Nay more ; this wonderful revelation could have been readily made by examining the Pineal Body of an extant lizard and observing in it a weird, unearthly, Cyclopean eye, which directs its stony gaze perpetually heavenward through a " skylight " in the crown of the head ! Surely to the student of comparative psychology this startling apparition might suggest the existence of a reptilian Pineal Soul ! This Cyclopean eye,

* See also Sir Humphrey Rolleston, *Endocrine Organs in Health and Disease* (Oxford, 1936).

which also persists in some fishes, represents anatomically an anterior outgrowth of the Pineal Body, framed in the parietal foramen—" the skylight "—situated in the summit of the skull.

This unpaired Pineal Eye certainly presents mysterious characters. To begin with, it develops quite differently from that of the ordinary paired eyes of vertebrates, in that its lens arises from the brain and not from the skin, and it represents only a moiety of the bilateral hollow embryonic pineal-bud springing from the roof covering the back of the forebrain ; while in all vertebrates the final development represents only the portion which springs from the left side. Developmentally speaking, then, the Pineal Body is built up in two parts : a sense-organ, the median eye, and a glandular structure, known as the epiphysis. In mammals, including man, only the latter is laid down, and recent research indicates that the moiety which persists in man becomes a gland which furnishes an internal secretion.* But it was not so long ago that the epiphysis together with the parietal eye were said to represent a vestigial sensory organ, implying that the median " Cyclopean " eye arose in the form of two eyes.†

But the very presence of the parietal eye is also a mystery for as an organ of sense its powers of vision, judging from its architecture, would fall far short of those of the natural paired eyes, and an auxiliary sense-organ, inferior in potentialities, seems absurd. Sinel, in his well-thought-out little book, ' *The Sixth Sense* ' (1927) draws an analogy between the Pineal Eye, the fenestræ in the head of the cockroach, and the ocelli in the head of the bee and in other insects. The function of all is the same, namely, " the reception of etheric rays that elude the ordinary sense-organs, and at the same time pass them on to those portions of the brain that can render them manifest, and even resolve them into some form of consciousness." Let us recall the unique manner in which the Pineal Eye develops. Sinel suggests that the Pineal Body or its counterpart in insects is the seat of a sixth sense which operates on the faculty of direction, and thereby he explains many phenomena, heretofore regarded as impenetrably mysterious, such as the homing instinct in bees and other insects and in birds on migration ; clairvoyance and telepathy. In support of the argument that insects are not always guided by one or more of the five ordinary physical senses, he cites the familiar case of moths ; if a live female moth be deposited in a box in a room, males of its kind soon arrive from all quarters, and either enter the room or flutter against the window for admission. As a control experiment, Fabre, the famous entomologist, captured fifteen male moths which had entered his study and were found fluttering round a box containing a female. He removed their antennæ (the organs of smell) and next morning carried the insects in a bag to a wood two miles away, where he set them free. The same evening they were back in his

* Sir Arthur Keith, *Human Morphology and Embryology.*
† Wiedersheim, *Comparative Anatomy of Vertebrates,* Translated by Parker (1897).

study, and evidently the olfactory sense had not guided them. In some experiments on the homing instinct in bees Darwin, who helped him, suggested that this mysterious faculty might depend upon some force comparable to magnetism or electric currents of some sort.

In the evolution of vertebrate animals, the Pineal Eye and its "window" have become closed, except in a few types of reptiles and fishes, and that part of the Pineal Body which persists has become occluded in varying degrees by superimposed areas of the brain. In birds and mammals the elaborate ocular architecture is wanting ; in fact, as already mentioned, only the basal part of the Pineal Body in man is laid down in the embryo. It is represented post-natally as an irregular mass of cells, rather simple in type, arranged in loosely disposed strands, interspersed with numerous blood-vessels. Fine granules, known as "brain-sand," composed of calcium, ammonium, and magnesium phosphates abound. This basal part is the moiety which serves as an internal secreting gland. Thus the Pineal Body in higher vertebrates has become so simplified histologically that it would seem as though retrograde changes had taken place. Nor indeed was it surprising that some scientists, not so long ago, suggested relegating the shrunken little "cherry-stone" to the position of a vestigial appendage of the brain.

Following such a signal change in structure, it seems difficult to sustain the theory that the Pineal Body in existing higher vertebrates still functions as a sense-organ, namely of direction—a sixth sense according to Sinel. In admitting that the Pineal body is not as large in man as in vertebrates of lower types (to say nothing of profound differences in structure), this investigator says :— "This is as we should expect, for *disuse* causes—in more or less degree —the atrophy of any bodily organ ; and in man—especially in civilised man—there is no call for it." Of the homing instinct perhaps that is fairly admissible ; but surely clairvoyance and telepathy loom as mysterious factors in human affairs !

As a matter of fact modern research has at last shed some definite light upon what seems to be the true purport of the Pineal Body. It is now known that it can function as an endocrine gland, and that its secretion, technically called a hormone, can gain access into the blood-stream and reach the male sex-glands, on which it can exercise its specific influence in controlling sexual development before the allotted time of puberty. Nevertheless, it is still a moot point as to whether the Pineal should be regarded strictly as an endocrine gland, in the same sense as the thyroid and the pituitary. Total excision of the Pineal Body in lower animals has certainly resulted, not only in accelerated sexual development accompanied by hypertrophy of the genitalia, but also in excessive development of sex-ornaments, such as combs, wattles, and other appendages in fowls. Tumours of the Pineal Gland, quite possibly by decontrolling its inhibiting mechanism, have been found intimately associated in some instances with startling manifestations of precocity in young boys. It

has been suggested, however, by Baudouin and others, in 1932, that sex-precocity with abnormally enlarged genitalia may be caused by disturbances in the base of the brain by the tumour, and not in changes in the Pineal Gland itself. In fact, Bailey in *Intercranial Tumours*, (1933), points out that the inhibitory powers of the pineal hormone are based on sparse evidence.

Recently, experimentalists have tried the effects of feeding animals with Pineal Gland material of their own species, and while the general results pointed to increased growth—at times astonishingly rapid—on the other hand, it was only in some cases that mental and sexual precocity were definitely marked. The animals submitted to experimental tests were mainly rats and guinea pigs, old and young. It is obvious that along this line of research the view that under normal conditions the pineal hormone effectually controls sexual maturity before the onset of puberty, is not irrefragably established. Sir Humphrey Rolleston in his *Endocrine Organs in Health and Disease*, (1936) points out in respect to Pineal tumours that some patients have been "wise beyond their years." In the *Proceedings, Royal Society of Medicine, London, 1909,* Nowell cites the case of a boy aged five-and-a-half years who portrayed physical development of a boy of fifteen years and who "spent much time in discussing the immortality of the soul and life after death"; recalling Descartes's contemplations concerning the function of the Pineal Body.

Mammary enlargement has occurred in boys afflicted with Pineal tumours, but like many erratic sexual developments featuring feminine traits in the male, this condition may be found apart from pineal tumours in otherwise quite healthy individuals, and indeed, may be correlated with lack of proper balance in the endocrine equilibrium, taken as a whole.

One other purport of the Pineal Body remains to be mentioned. De Candia (*Rev. franc. d'endocrinol., Paris* 1931) considers, from his investigations made on man and lower animals, that the Pineal Body controls a centre in the brain concerned with the metabolism of calcium.

In conclusion, it cannot be gainsaid that while modern research has made very considerable strides, there are still many gaps in our knowledge and many discordant notes to be eliminated. In fact Sampson Wright, in his article on "Endocrines in Theory and Practice; Thymus and Pineal Glands," in the *British Medical Journal* of April 24th, 1937, says:—"It is exceedingly doubtful whether the evidence available at the moment is sufficient to warrant the inclusion of the pineal or the thymus among the ductless glands which secrete specific hormones." Doubtless, therefore, to the scientist and the physician, no less than to the mystic philosopher, whatever be their shade of thought, however fixed or fluid be their ethic, to each and all, further investigations of the little "cherry-stone," so full of charm and mystery, will continue to prove a matter of sheer delight.

C. J. PATTEN

MYSTICS AND SCHOLARS

[Lovers of Asia must feel grateful to Arthur Waley for the beautiful English translations he has given us of ancient lore, among them *The Tale of Genji*. In this short article he reconciles the attitudes of men of two castes, who ought to be co-operating and thus benefiting the world to a greater extent than they are doing at present. His latest publication is *The Book of Songs* which no doubt will charm the readers of his *170 Chinese Poems* and other works.—EDS.]

One has only to glance at the review columns of any journal devoted to mysticism or any learned publication dealing with the study of Oriental texts to see that the scholar and the mystic are apt to take an unflattering view of each other's activities. To the mystic it seems that the scholar is handling his subject entirely from outside, and epithets such as 'purblind', 'pedantic', 'superficial', 'narrow', are among the kindliest that his critic applies to him. To the scholar, on the other hand, the productions of the mystic often appear to be slovenly, uncritical, lacking in historical and ethnological perspective; in a word, 'unscholarly', a label which at once betrays the scholar's failure to understand that there can be aims quite other than his own. For it is no more the business of a mystic to be scholarly than of a scholar to be esoteric.

This mutual recrimination comes, it is clear, from the failure of mystic and scholar to understand each other's aims. The mystic has reached and would lead others into realms where the mind cannot enter, and he measures the value of a text by its capacity to carry the reader beyond the zone of common experience. The scholar's approach to a text is of a quite different kind. He wants to know how it came into existence, what relation it bears to historical facts, what peculiarities it exhibits, whether of dialect, metric or composition.

Take the case of the *Bhagavad-Gita*. A mystic will read it from end to end with acquiescence. He will not stop to ask if the combat which must not be evaded is a spiritual or a physical one, nor be perplexed by the strangeness of a battlefield that is at the same time an academy of metaphysics. He will be content to harvest in the emotional experience which an imaginative reading of the work implies.

But the scholar will from the very start be asking questions. What is this strange work? A battle ballad transformed into a mystic treatise or a mystic treatise popularized under the guise of a ballad? What state of society does it reflect? What influences, whether of Buddhism, Jainism, Occidental knowledge, does it show?

Or imagine the case of a manuscript found in desert sands. To the scholar its main interest will be the light it throws on the order in which events happened. It proves, let us say, that this or that doctrine did not begin with Asanga, that such or such a familiar monastic custom was unknown to the early Sarvastivadins.

The mystic, on the other hand, will value the find for the intrinsic importance of its contents, for the capacity of the recovered text to carry him into hitherto unexplored regions of experience. Thus, to the mystic the activities of the scholar are apt to seem trivial; whereas to the scholar the enthusiasm of the mystic will often appear to be based on mere credulousness and gullibility. For the scholar sees him, let us say, deriving inspiration from what can very satisfactorily be proved to be a forgery. He does not understand that from the mystic's point of view it is a matter of complete indifference how a document came into existence, provided that it is of intrinsic value.

I have dealt with extreme cases of misunderstanding. In practice it is more often the mystic who uses hard words about the scholar; whereas the scholar either ignores the mystic or is mildly facetious at his expense in a patronizing "short notice."

There is (from the mystic's point of view) this much to be said for the scholar: that without him the mystic would in most cases never have had access to the non-European texts which are to-day the basis of most European mysticism. Scholars made the dictionaries and grammars, forged the tools which the mystic who would go beyond his own native speech is forced to use. Moreover the objectivity which the scholar imposes upon himself, the determination to find out facts, however disappointing they may be, the resolute exclusion of his own emotions and desires—this objectivity is a state of mind that has at least the distinction of having very seldom been achieved in the history of the world. The Greeks achieved it, and European science has aspired to it since the Renaissance. Elsewhere it has been unknown. I have sometimes thought that the disinterestedness of scholarship at its best, with its renunciation of emotion and desire, implies a discipline no less arduous than that of *yoga*, and that the scholar at his best has achieved a spiritual state in some measure analogous to that of the *yogi*.

ARTHUR WALEY

"Listen, Madam. Don't worry about other people. Just look into your own heart. You'll know soon enough then which way to decide."

—Arthur Waley's *Bridge of Dreams*

THE LONG HOUSE

THE LEAGUE OF THE IROQUOIS

[James Truslow Adams, the celebrated historian of the U.S.A. wrote in our issue of last January on "Lincoln and the World Crisis" in which he showed what line the great statesman would follow if he were in Europe to-day.

In this essay our esteemed contributor writes about the League of a tribe of Red Indians which in its day and generation proved a success while the League of Nations of to-day has failed. Mr. Adams points out that "the origin of the Iroquois League is lost in the mists of legend" and adds that, "what first started these on the road toward a political development nowhere else achieved at such a stage is as insoluble a problem as what started the Greeks of Athens on their extraordinary development." We might well ask—Can it not be that the League in 1609 was already a remnant of a very ancient civilization? Why should we take it for granted that the Red Indian tribes were mere primitive savages? Why could they not be a race declining in civilization? For example are not the Greeks of to-day a remnant of the great culture and civilization of old Greece?

Another interesting fact brought out by our able and painstaking author is the existence of a kind of a Hindu caste-system. There seem to have been eight castes among the Iroquois, and the League had a social significance besides the political one; it administered the important institution of inter-marriage. How the family and caste were used to preserve political peace is shown in the article.—EDS.]

One of the most interesting political organizations in the history of man was that of the federal league of the Five Nations of Iroquois Indian stock which, when the Europeans first came to America, occupied practically all of the present State of New York from the Hudson River to the Great Lakes. The league is interesting both because it appears to have been the highest form of political life attained by any race while still in the hunting stage, and because it was a deliberate and successful effort to preserve peace among peoples who had hitherto lived in constant warfare with one another.

Peoples who live by hunting require a large geographical area even when game is fairly plentiful, and as population increases fresh hunting fields have to be sought. Such peoples, therefore, even of one racial stock, tend to break up into small groups, tribes or hordes. Moreover, as the pressure on the means of subsistence becomes greater, these groups come to consider the normal attitude toward one another as that of hostility. War becomes not only a means of preserving group existence but a pastime and the path to personal glory and prestige. Unlike the complex agricultural and mining civilizations of central America and Peru, such was the condition prevailing among the half million or so of Indians who occupied the present area of the United States when the white men first appeared among them, with a few exceptions.

There were innumerable "tribes" who spent their lives in hunting for food and fighting one another for possession of hunting grounds, and for love of fighting. Among these

were the five, so-called " nations ", who dwelt in the beautiful interior of New York State, the Mohawks, Oneidas, Onondagas, Senecas and Cayugas, all of whose names have been preserved as those of rivers and lakes. What first started these on the road toward a political development nowhere else achieved at such a stage is as insoluble a problem as what started the Greeks of Athens on their extraordinary development. The origin of the Iroquois League is lost in the mists of legend but it had evidently long been an accomplished fact when the Dutch arrived in 1609. Among the present-day survivors, some four thousand or so, living on reservations, the league still maintains a shadowy existence although its real importance ended in 1783 when the United States became independent and took over the Indian lands. Prior to that the British Government had treated with the League as with any other foreign power.

Two points about the origin of the League seem certain. One is that it was the result not of slow development of blind forces but of political thinking at a particular point in time, and that its object was to bring peace to warring tribes. The Five Nations had been constantly engaged in war with one another, and with all others. From the time the League was founded the Iroquois became one peaceful confederation and so powerful as to be able to control to a great extent the destiny of other tribes over nearly a quarter of the United States, from the Atlantic Ocean to the Mississippi River and down to the Carolinas. In the interest of peace, these other tribes were given the simple, if bitter, choice between submission or extermination. Although a League of so-called savages in the hunting stage, so great was its power and influence that it had a permanent and important effect on world history. Always treated well by the Dutch and by the British after the conquest of New Netherland in 1665, the Iroquois stood steadily for the British against the French, and although I think it too much to say it was due to them that North America became Anglo-Saxon in culture instead of Latin, they undoubtedly were a great factor in bringing about that result.

It is not easy to discuss the structure of the League in a few words, for it was both simple and complex, but we can do so in broad outline. The Iroquois called it " the long house," which well describes it. Architecturally, the " long house " of the Iroquois was a communal dwelling in which many families lived their independent family lives but under one roof. Such was the League.

The Five Nations, whose numbers have been variously estimated at from 15,000 to 70,000, each maintained its " national " independence and yet united into a larger community. The connection was not a mere alliance which, among civilized as well as barbarian societies, is likely to be a rope of sand. It was a federal union, something of the nature of the United States and other such unions, but even such a union might not have long survived the constant temptation to the coveting of each other's lands and to warfare. The interesting point about this League

is the depth to which its roots extended.

The general affairs of the group of Five Nations were managed by a body of fifty Sachems, the number being permanently fixed. A certain number of these fifty was also permanently allotted to each Nation, although, for reasons we need not enter into here, the numbers were not equally divided. By means of a peculiar form of group voting, however, each Nation had an equal voice, though unequal representation, in the Sachem body of fifty. The Indian had no idea of majority voting, and, like the old Diet in Poland, any vote of the Sachems had to be unanimous or the proposal before them failed of passage. The normal difficulty of frequent deadlocks was overcome, however, by the same peculiar system of group voting just alluded to, and apparently unanimity was the general rule. The Sachems had charge and complete control of all general civil and military policies affecting the welfare of all Five Nations, and their offices were hereditary in a sense which we shall explain in a moment. They represented the federal state, so to call it, in all dealings with other Indian tribes or with the white men, and for decisions in such matters met in a council. On the other hand, they had nothing to do with the conduct of military operations in a war decided upon, nor with the internal affairs of each nation. War, among the Indians, was usually an affair of a personal leader gathering around him his own group of warriors, and when a war was started it was left to such to carry it on. The internal affairs of each nation were run by the Sachems of each nation but as a group of leaders in the nation and not in the general Council.

The League was thus an oligarchy and each nation was a smaller oligarchy but tempered by much democracy. A class of "chiefs" developed, men who by prowess in war or superior abilities in civil life became influential. The position of chief was not hereditary and so opened a career for the talents. Both the chiefs and many of the ordinary Indians, women as well as men, attended the national or League Councils, and if they thought the Sachems were adopting measures which were unwise or disliked, they would hold a separate meeting and then convey their own decisions to the Sachems who were thus closely in touch with and influenced by public opinion.

As so far described there is perhaps nothing remarkable about the League as a political idea, and considering the Indian's love for war and the fact that these five nations had been at war with one another generation after generation, such an organization could not have been expected to survive long. We now come to the most interesting point about it. Although the League was a deliberate piece of political thinking, these hunter Indians realized that if it were not to be a mere perishable alliance it must be interwoven with the most important institutions of Indian life and thought. In this field, the "tribe" or gens was of supreme importance. Of these there were eight among the Iroquois, named from their symbols, the Wolf, Deer, Bear, Snipe, Beaver,

Heron, Turtle and Hawk. We have not space here to detail at length the regulations, known to any anthropologist, as to marriage with respect to a tribe or gens. Suffice it to say, that every member of each tribe considered himself as much the blood brother or sister of every other member as if they had had the same parents. This entailed loyalties and also prohibited inter-marriage. The Wolf, Bear, Beaver and Turtle tribes were also considered as being brothers and sisters, and the other four likewise, so that a Wolf could not marry a Bear but had to choose from Hawk, Heron etc.

Whether just at the time of the formation of the League or not we do not know, these tribes were in effect divided into five parts, and one-fifth placed in each of the five nations. The extraordinary consequence of this move was that war between the nations became impossible because a Hawk in the Seneca tribe was blood brother to a Hawk in the other four nations, and so on, and could not fight him. It has been said that " this was the means of effecting the most perfect union of separate nations ever devised by the wit of man." Moreover, as a man or woman could not marry within the tribe, there were two tribes represented in every household. Descent was traced in the female line and the tribe was considered as one family. We may here come back to the hereditary status of the fifty Sachems. The office was hereditary but did not descend from father to son. It was merely hereditary in the family, which was the tribe. Within that unit, therefore, the family, or tribe, could always elect its ablest man as hereditary Sachem. With the power of election also went the right of deposition, so that the whole system was both flexible and democratic while at the same time providing for continuity and a power so great as to give these five small nations control of nearly a quarter of the present United States over other tribes who did not possess their own extraordinary political sagacity. From time to time these others had joined in temporary alliances for war purposes, to be broken almost as soon as made. None of them ever brought such power as came to the Iroquois or brought peace.

It is impossible to say what might have happened had the white man not come to America to interrupt this beginning of political development among the aborigines. Whether, given time, they might have advanced from the hunting to a higher stage, and built up a civilization comparable to those of the Inca, the Aztec or the others to the south, cannot now be determined. What they did do, however, at their own stage, is very remarkable, and carries possibly some lesson for us to-day.

In the present war-torn world, filled with old feuds and hatreds, it may seem impossible and too idealistic to envisage any new order which will bring peace and security. And yet, what would have appeared more impossible than that five nations of savages who had been hereditary enemies through a long period of tradition could possibly have developed such a working " League of Nations " as the

Senecas, Mohawks and others did? They worked out a system that endured for several hundred years at least, and might in time have embraced a continent. The partial inclusion of a sixth nation, the Tuscaroras, showed that the system had possibilities of growth and expansion. We must note, however, that with all the political ingenuity displayed, *the fundamental reason why the plan worked was spiritual and not political.* The "Long House" was not merely an alliance. It was not merely a federal union of states. It was a social organism based on the fundamental belief in the Brotherhood of Man. It was because a Seneca Wolf and an Oneida Wolf and a Mohawk Wolf and so on, felt that they were blood brothers and so could not wield the tomahawk against one another that their hands were stayed, and peace came where it would have been least expected. It was this sudden shift from the feeling of enmity to the feeling of brotherhood that brought and maintained peace, stability and prosperity. Obviously, we cannot use the same mechanism to-day but we can use the fundamental idea, and is it hoping too much that we may yet develop a mechanism in accord with our conditions which may enable us, as it did the savage Iroquois, to base a political structure on spiritual foundations and so ensure its success? In a world devoted to politics and economics, and looking to them for its salvation, there seems to me a profound lesson to be learned from this enduring work of North American barbarians. The "Long House" achieved and endured. If the League of Nations fails, we may well contrast the basis of the one with that of the other.

JAMES TRUSLOW ADAMS

The (ancient and modern) Western American Zuñi Indians seem to have entertained similar views. Their present-day customs, their traditions and records, all point to the fact that, from time immemorial, their institutions—political, social and religious—were (and still are) shaped according to the septenary principle. Thus all their ancient towns and villages were built in clusters of six, around a seventh. It is always a group of seven, or of thirteen, and always the six surround the seventh. Again, their sacerdotal hierarchy is composed of six "Priests of the House" seemingly synthesized in the seventh, who is a woman, the "PRIESTESS MOTHER."

The Zuñi priests receive an annual tribute, to this day, of corn of seven colours. Undistinguished from other Indians during the whole year, on a certain day, they come out (the six priests and one priestess) arrayed in their priestly robes, each of a colour sacred to the particular God whom the priest serves and personifies; each of them representing one of the seven regions, and each receiving corn of the colour corresponding to that region.

—*The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, pp. 628-29.

THE FOREIGN MISSIONS OF ASOKA

[Dr. Radhakumud Mookerji, scholar and historian, is well-known for his researches, especially in Asokan lore.—EDS.]

The question of the foreign missions of Asoka is somewhat bound up with the general question of the influence of Indian or Eastern thought on the thought of the West. Vincent Smith has pointed out that "it is undeniable that Buddhist thought has left its mark upon some phases of Western thought." Max Müller had first shown that there are many parallels between early Buddhism and Christianity which cannot be taken as mere coincidences, but must have been the outcome of cultural intercourse. Among these may be mentioned customs like confession, fasting, priestly celibacy and the use of rosaries, which Christianity must have borrowed from Buddhism. Again, the stamp of Indian thought can be definitely traced in Æsopian fables and in some parts of the Bible.

It also left its mark upon certain non-Christian systems which flourished in early times in Western Asia. One of these was the sect of the *Essenes*, a small Jewish community on the shores of the Dead Sea, which followed certain semi-ascetic practices. These Essenes flourished earlier than Christianity. According to James Moffatt, "Buddhistic tendencies helped to shape some of the Essenic characteristics as well as some of those in second century Gnosticism." (*Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, V, 401) Similarly there was another sect of pre-Christian Judaism, the Therapeutæ, who lived in the neighbourhood of Alexandria and developed doctrines and ways of life which also are traced to the influence of Buddhism. According to Moffatt (*Ibid.*, XII, 318), "several traits of the Therapeutic Discipline recall Buddhist Monasticism, *e.g.*, combination of cœnobitic life with study, contemplation, and vegetarianism." Some have traced the term Therapeut to the Buddhistic Thera-puttas—sons of the Thera. He further holds that Buddhist influence had penetrated Egyptian Hellenism by the first century B.C., as it had penetrated the later Gnosticism.*

The most important agency in the spread of Indian thought to the West was undoubtedly the foreign missions of Asoka who reigned between 274-232 B.C., though it is difficult to find adequate evidence of

* Cf. H. P. Blavatsky's *Isis Unveiled* II, 42. (1877)—"The Gnostics entertained many of the Essenean ideas; and the Essenes had their "greater" and "minor" Mysteries at least two centuries before our era. They were the *Isarim* or *Initiates*, the descendants of the Egyptian hierophants, in whose country they had been settled for several centuries before they were converted to Buddhistic monasticism by the missionaries of King Asoka, and amalgamated later with the earliest Christians; and they existed, probably, before the old Egyptian temples were desecrated and ruined in the incessant invasions of Persians, Greeks, and other conquering hordes." There are numerous interesting references to this topic in this very first book of Mme. Blavatsky—EDS.

their scope and character and the content of their teachings abroad. Broadly speaking, there are two sources of evidence, *viz.*, texts and stones, the many legends centring round the personality of Asoka and the various inscriptions which Asoka had recorded on rocks, constituting a sort of autobiography. The foreign missions are testified to in three of his inscriptions—Rock Edicts II, V and XIII. These Edicts show that Asoka despatched his missions to several foreign peoples and states as follows :—

(1) The Cholas, the Pāndyas, the Satiyaputras, the Keralaputras and Tāmraparṇī (Ceylon) in the South ;
(2) The Yonas, Kambojas and Gandharas on the Northwestern frontier ;
(3) The Rāṭṭrikas, the Pitinikas and other peoples of Aparāṅtaka (Western India) ;
(4) The tribal territory of Asoka's frontier peoples (*Aṁtas*) "up to the extent of 600 yojanas" ;
(5) The five Hellenistic States and countries ruled by the following Kings, *viz.* :—
  (*a*) Antiochos II Theos of Syria (261-246 B.C.)
  (*b*) Ptolemy II Philadelphos of Egypt (285-247 B.C.)
  (*c*) Antigonos Gonatas of Macedonia (278-239 B.C.)
  (*d*) Magas of Cyrene (West of Egypt) (300-285 B.C.) and
  (*e*) Alexander (of Epirus?) (272?-258 B.C.)

Asoka's reference to these Western Kings as his contemporaries is very valuable for his own chronology and also for locating his disputed foreign missions definitely in both space and time. As all these kings were alive up to 258 B.C. it must have been at that time that his foreign missions were working in distant Western countries.

The next questions are, what was the exact work of these missions and what were their teachings ?

According to Rock Edict II, theirs was a humanitarian mission, the organisation of measures for the relief of the suffering of all sentient beings, men and animal, by means of medical treatment (*chikitsā*) on the basis of the supply of all the requisites for such treatment and the materials for the manufacture of medicines, such as "herbs, roots, and fruits," together with an adequate staff of physicians. In Rock Edict V, the scope of these Missions is enlarged to include the promotion of moral in addition to physical welfare. His missionaries were "now employed in the establishment and growth of Dharma," among those who were religiously inclined (*dharma-yukta*).

To put this new religion in a nutshell, it depended and insisted upon Right Conduct in all relations of life. Therefore, these religious missionaries of Asoka had a wide field of work embracing all castes and creeds, all nationalities, Indians and foreigners, "Yonas" and Hindus, and all classes and ranks of society. Thus we are told (in R. E. V.) that they were at work among "ascetics and householders, soldiers and their chiefs, and all sects." They sought also to relieve suffering among "the destitute and the disabled" and were even empowered to apply remedies against legal suffering by having justice tempered by mercy where deserved. The scheme of Social Service for the promotion of physical

and moral welfare was further generalised and finally defined under the designation of *Dharma-Vijaya* (non-violent moral conquest) in R. E. XIII. Here Asoka takes credit for the fact that this *Dharma-Vijaya* by which people are conquered by love and converted to the moral life has been already "repeatedly achieved by him both in his own dominions and among all his frontier peoples," up to the territories of the five Western Kings mentioned above. He further states in the same *Edict* : "Everywhere are people following my religious precepts. Even those, to whom my envoys (*dutas*) do not go, follow my precepts by hearing of them." This shows that by about 258 B.C. Asoka's missions were flourishing in the West.

It must be stressed that his missionaries were not preaching abroad any sectarian religious doctrines. If they had been, those doctrines could have made no headway in the West. Indeed, taking their preaching in this light, the late Dr. T. W. Rhys Davids, with all his zeal for Buddhist thought, condemned Asoka's reference to his foreign missions as "mere royal rodomontade," adding that it was absurd "to expect the Greeks to discard their Gods at the bidding of the Hindus." But the fact is that the Hindus were not anxious to bring their Gods to Europe. They were anxious only to bring to it India's message of Peace on Earth and Good Will among Men, of Universal Peace, of *Dharma-Vijaya,* the conquest of right superseding the bloody conquest of might to be proclaimed by *Dharma-ghosha* (drum of Dharma, Law) silencing the *Bherī-ghosha* (Drum of War) (R. E. IV).

The subject of preaching prescribed by Asoka for his mission is clearly indicated in his inscription recently discovered at Yerragudi in Kurnool District. It states that his officers, the *Rājūkas,* must "announce by beat of drums to the Jānapadas (people of the countryside) as well as to the Rāshṭrikas (probably urban people) the following religious message : "Proper attention should be paid to parents, to teachers and preceptors and tender regard should be entertained for all sentient beings." The inscription further states :—

> Thus announce ye the King's Message by his authority. Now the matter being such, here set ye the elephant riders, the Karṇakas (clerks), the charioteers, and the Brahmins (religious teachers) your resident pupils, to work according to the good old rule... Kinsmen should propound the matter to their kinsmen, and teachers to their resident pupils, so that this noble tradition remains unimpaired. Thus instruct ye your pupils living with you, and keep them engaged.

All this epigraphic evidence on Asoka's foreign missions is supplemented by that of texts. Some of these give interesting concrete details, the actual names of individual missionaries, and of the countries to which they were assigned, together with the particular texts prescribed for the teaching of each.

According to the *Mahāvaṁśa,* in the seventeenth year after Asoka's coronation, *i.e.,* in about 253 B.C., the monk Moggaliputta Tissa convoked the third Buddhist Council, at the end of which "he sent forth *Theras,* one here and one there." Their names and the countries to which they were deputed are thus given :—

Missionary :	*Country* :
1. Majjhantika	Kashmir and Gāndhāra.
2. Maharakshita	Yavana or Greek country.
3. Majjhima	Himalaya country.
4. Dharmarakshita (a Yavana)	Aparāntaka.
5. Mahādharmarakshita	Mahārāshṭra.
6. Mahādeva	Mahīshamaṇḍala (Mysore or Māndhāta).
7. Rakshita	Vanavāsī (North Kanara).
8. Soṇa and Uttara	Suvarṇabhūmi (Pegu and Moulmein).
9. Mahendra with Rishṭria, Utriya, Sambala and Bhadrasāra.	Lankā (Ceylon).

This list is repeated in *Samantapāsādikā* with the additional detail that when Majjhima went to Hemavanta-Pradeśa, then comprising five districts or *rāshṭras*, he took with him four associates, namely, Kassapagotta, Alakadeva, Dunddubhisara and Mahādeva. That these names are not legendary is proved by the fact that some of them are mentioned in inscriptions found on certain relic caskets unearthed at Stupa No. 2 at Sānchī and Stupa No. 2 at Sonārī.* The same text also mentions the subjects of teaching prescribed for these missionaries for their respective countries.

For the Himalaya country the text prescribed was the well-known *Dharma - chakra - pravartana - Sūtra*, propounding the famous eightfold path of Buddhism.

For the Aparānta country (Western India), it was the *Aggikhandhūpama-Sutta* (The Discourse on the Parable of the Flames of Fire, *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, IV, 128-135). This sutta teaches that it is better to die in flames than in sins with their dreadful consequences and inculcates the virtue of *appamāda*.

For Kashmir and Gāndhāra, the text is *Āsīvisūpamāsutta* (given in *Saṁyutta*, IV, 172). It is the parable of four kinds of poisonous snakes, five enemies, the murderer and marauders. The four snakes stand for the four Mahābhūtas (great elements), the five enemies for the five aggregates of existence, the murderer is passion (*nandi-rāge*) and the marauders are the six objects of sense. The Sutta teaches that one can escape from all these enemies by taking the Noble Eightfold Path.

For Mahīshamaṇḍala, the text taken was the *Devadūta-sutta* (as given in *Majjhima*, III, 178 and *Aṅguttara*, I, 138). It tells of the messengers of the God of Death such as (1) Punishment of a sinner after death, (2) decay and (3) death, as warnings against sin, which is defined as lack of proper attention to mother, father, Śramaṇas and Brāhmaṇas, cherishing wrong views and the like.

The text carried to Vanavāsī was *Anamatagga-pariyāya* (*Saṁyutta*, II, 178f) which refers to the never-ending succession of births and deaths in *saṁsāra* with all its ills, from which the only escape is a knowledge of the Four Truths and the Noble Eightfold Path.

The text for Mahārāṭṭha (Mahārāshṭra) was *Mahānārada-Kassapa-Jātaka* in which a king asks an ascetic as to various moral duties and is helped to get over his heresy.

The famous *Brahmajāla-suttanta* was carried to Suvarṇabhūmi and

* For details see my *Asoka*, pp. 232-235.

Kālakārāma-suttanta to Yonaraṭṭham.

It is thus apparent that all these texts taught in the different regions on the frontiers of India and in the interior conveyed no sectarian doctrines, but only the Buddhist principles of morality, of thought and life, which would be approved by all, irrespective of caste or creed.

It will be noticed also that whereas the Edicts of Asoka testify to the work of his missions in foreign countries, in Europe and in Africa, and also on the Indian frontiers, the legends confine the missions to the frontiers, and say nothing about their work elsewhere in distant foreign countries. This suited Rhys Davids's views, so he accepted the evidence of these texts and not Asoka's own words in his Edicts.

In conclusion we may note that even in the Edicts we find a clue to the texts that Asoka specially liked and wished all Buddhists, monks and nuns, clergy and laity to recite and to meditate on daily. These are indicated in his Bhabru Edict and called (1) *Vinaya-Samukase* (The Excellent Treatise on Moral Discipline), (2) *Aliya-Vasāni* (Practices of the Sages), (3) *Anāgata-bhayāni* (Fears to Come), (4) *Muni-gāthā* (Poem on "Who is a hermit?"), (5) *Mauneya-sūte* (Discourse on Quietism), (6) *Upatisapasine* (Questions of Upatishya) and (7) *Lāghulovāda* (Sermon to Rāhula). All these texts selected by Asoka out of the vast body of the Buddhist scriptures of his times have now been traced and identified. Their contents throw light on the cast of his mind with its strong leaning towards asceticism and spirituality and its indifference to the rituals of religion ; its preference for the solitary life of individual meditation as against the collective religious life of the Saṁgha. This ideal is set forth in the Texts numbered (4) and (5), describing the recluse who has renounced the world and lives in solitude and meditation in quest of *Nirvāṇa*. Text No. (2) insists on simplicity and asceticism as regards food, dress, and dwelling and on meditation. "The Fears to Come" in No. (3) are such hindrances to spiritual life as Disease, Decay, Famine, War, or Schism in the Saṁgha, against which the remedy mentioned is strenuous self-exertion. In No. (7) are pointed out the inner hindrances to spiritual life, against which the remedy recommended is self-examination—scrutiny of all that is done by body, mind and speech.

It will thus be seen, on the evidence of both the legends and the inscriptions, that Asoka's missionaries were deputed to preach in the various regions in India and in the Western countries not the narrow doctrines of any particular sect or creed but the principles of the moral life which are common to all sects and creeds. Those principles are the essence (*sāra* as used in R. E. XII) of all creeds and constitute the foundation of a universal religion of which Asoka was the pioneer.

RADHAKUMUD MOOKERJI

INDIVIDUALISM AND THE WHOLLY GHOST

[Jack Common was the Assistant-Editor of *The Adelphi*, during 1930-1936 and intends to bring out a book on social philosophy.

Our author here advocates what in Occult parlance is called Love for Orphan Humanity. This essay recognizes that "Humanity is a great Brotherhood" and suggests what Mme. Blavatsky did in 1890 :

"Humanity is a great Brotherhood by virtue of the sameness of the material from which it is formed physically and morally. Unless, however, it becomes a Brotherhood also intellectually, it is no better than a superior genus of animals."

Who doubts that our civilization is ensouled by animal passions?—EDS.]

Nowadays it has become the fashion in some circles to regard the growth of Communism as a negation of Christianity, and in others, as a fulfilment of the Christian vision. This situation is not new. Western thinking has developed from a basis of Christian belief, which has been its permanent background, and naturally every development is apt to be compared to that background. Some find the differences then seen as calamitous ; to others the resemblances are a reassurance. And the process is made confusing because the people who are making the comparison are using as a measure something they cannot be fully aware of : Christianity is to them something half-buried in their unconscious ; they acquired it as children, and often give enormous value to special parts of the creed simply because those parts penetrated deepest and have the greatest emotional significance.

In its first statement Christianity was a wholly anarchic faith. It appealed to the individual man to take care of his soul's salvation, and think little of his place in the world's affairs. The State (or the World, as it was called) could go to ruin, and all would be well if individual men had achieved grace. The World duly went to ruin, and of all the civilised institutions of that day the only one left standing was the Christian church. Hence, willy-nilly and for its own preservation, it had to develop a care for the traffic of a temporal world which by its postulates it had declared fundamentally unreal and illusory.

The cynical Romans of the governing class who had struggled against this anarchism when it first appeared might have had their laugh now, if there were any of them alive to look on. For essentially the hard material facts of the situation were not very different from those the Empire had wrestled with. Still, the most efficient method of wealth-production was slavery, and slavery necessitates the organisation of classes whose material privileges must excite just that kind of ambition which Christianity ceaselessly denounced. It was not possible to recognise in the temporal world the spiritual principle of the equal value of individual souls. Nor was it thinkable that that principle could be abandoned. This was a dilemma which only a compromise could solve. And the Church solved it by creating a mystical hierarchy of

rank, which allotted degrees of power to different orders of men purposely for the organisation of material matters, while insisting that in the real world, the world of spiritual reality, every man had an equal chance of Heaven.

This inevitably involved giving special emphasis to such parts of the creed as condoned the compromise. Therefore, for many centuries it was the Fatherhood of God which was celebrated in every hierarchical institution ; and that same aspect of God was insisted on by artists who expressed its feminine mode, in the splendid figure of the Madonna. The Church, which had been from the beginning a free community of souls, now became in addition a hierarchy of rank governed and guided through the temporal pilgrimage by the beneficent Father-God, from whom all authority derived. Secular organisations were made to the same plan and in the same hope of achieving divine protection. Thus there could be built up a State no less efficient than the Roman but avoiding the Roman vices and ambitions.

In it every man had his rank, his place ; he was honoured for his office, not for himself. Rank was much more than the guinea-stamp moulding the common gold of men. It was mystical, a sign of God's governance on earth to be accepted and respected as something 'given'. It appeared equally in religious and civil institutions so that everyone took his place in a kind of animated heraldry which seems very picturesque to us when we look back on it from our tradesmen's streets and democratic dwelling-places.

Now, once it was set up, no one expected this universal order of Christendom to be seriously disturbed. It was not something which could be added to or improved to any great extent. It was merely designed as a temporal shelter for the millions of souls in their difficult earthly pilgrimage between the Eternities. In theory, at least, the efforts of every Christian were bent Heavenward. You were supposed to pursue grace, and if in the course of it you happened to occupy many decorative and lucrative offices they were not the prime object of ambition. In this way the fine anarchy of early Christian principle was made to fit in with the practical necessities of the day. You cared nothing for earthly distinction ; it was impossible to run cities or nations without those distinctions ; therefore they were given a semi-divine sanction and kept as far as possible out of the lists of ambition. So the whole system of rank was meant to stand as a sort of incubator protecting the Christian virtues as they evolved in the individual souls beneath.

But in time the fledgling grew. No one recognised him as virtue, Christian or pagan. On the contrary Christendom seemed to be faced with a general revolt of its members, an era of impious anarchy. At first it was a negative, a negating, revolt ; it looked like sin, and was so denounced. Abbots and bishops, kings and nobles, most of all merchants, began to act without respect to the worthiness of their calling ; it became less and less important that a man had such-and-such a rank, and more and more that

he was so-and-so ; it became less noticeable that people were Christians and more that they were English, Dutch or Spanish. This looked like disintegration, and the wise men of that long bad period were concerned to check the decay before it wrecked Christendom. They could not check it, however, for it spread with the speed of a general realisation and came to all in some way.

Then other men of wisdom, who were also men of vision, discovered that this negation of rank was powerful because it contained a positive affirmation. It could upset the old Church and all the derivative orders because it proclaimed a veritable God—if not God the Father, then God the Son. God was in the old hierarchies as long as He was really reverenced there ; no less is He in the individual, and if He is properly reverenced *there,* individuals can act with hitherto unknown freedom and come to no harm. That was a fine consecrating vision. It turned a vast oppressive disintegrating force into a freedom for a great many people, though, of course, they paid for that freedom in the way you have to by having to learn a personal discipline known as Puritanism by which the individual is protected from his own excesses.

It took some seeing, that did, and it was worth the effort. An authentic glimpse of God this awareness of the worth of the individual. But never let us believe that such a vision can be final : in their nature they are fragmentary, and because of what they exclude, the element of denial in them soon begins to bulk larger than the initial revelation. So it is now with this Protestant proclamation of God-in-the-Individual. God is not in the individual now, not in any meaningful way. We should recognise that easily but for the still lingering habits of the last revelation. So, though the social landscape is plainly littered with empty shrines, there are many who go on quarrying into themselves hoping to turn up something if they dig deep enough. And many too, who realise the barrenness of that but are apt to think, if not here, nowhere ; or if not nowhere, then back in some dream of the past which is the poetic equivalent of nowhere.

That despair is simply a failure to apprehend the multiform nature of divinity. If God is not in man-as-individual perhaps He is in the common humanity of man ; if He is not in us, then perhaps He is in the other fellow, especially in all the other fellows taken together. The Protestant worship of Jesus the Son of God vividly revealed a quality which had become overlaid in the formalised mediæval societies. Yet finally it insists on one aspect, one revelation, and to do that for too long is to lose the vision altogether in the end. So it happens now that the great majority of our people cease to exist in the social consciousness as individuals : they are ' mass,' the ' masses.' You and I are individuals to our friends still, but when we walk in the street, or buy in the shops, or read in newspapers, we are ' masses ' —a new and horrible aspect for us.

Probably if we could look back on this period from some distance in time we should see that practically all the efforts of our statesmen and ideo-

logues were bent towards accommodating the alien growth in the confines of an individualist economy, handling it, you see, without sympathy or understanding. We are all unwilling servants of these masses, and what we give them we grudge. They must have clothes and houses and fun. It is an accursed necessity. So the houses and fun and clothes they get do not publish anybody's joy in the giving : they are ugly and unblessed. Look how contemptuous of its readers the mass newspaper is, for instance ! It is compiled by captured individualists who think they shame themselves in this service, because they serve no God that they can discern. Yet the masses are men too; men in a new, though up till now, a negative unity. Suppose now, that they suddenly see a consecration in that, and are glad they are no longer English, Dutch, Spanish, quaintly divided under geographical totems, nor that they are any longer little-gents-to-be ; suppose that they begin to rejoice in their common humanity, which may yet prove the richest thing ; that they see how their united host has possibilities before it which could never exist for the petty insecure fractions which previously have stood as symbol of the human destinies. Such a discovery would be a genuine revelation of God—of God the Wholly Ghost, the third phase of the Christian Trinity, the one which is most universal and least likely to be coffined up in the worship of a sect.

Somehow, by some such miracle of response, we have to learn to value men even when they don't look like men, when they are a mob or a headline in a newspaper. If we fail in this, it is destruction. Consider how terribly easy it is to deal slaughter from the air on the crowds beneath. We cannot defend them—why ? Because it is possible to defend only what you hold precious, and we value these people only as individuals, not as the mass they look from above. That is the most obvious symbol of the problem by which we are faced. We have to become vitally aware of the human masses into which the bulk of every population has now been turned. So far the necessity for that awareness has been stated chiefly in the terms of various challenging political creeds, and is therefore often diminished in narrow debates. These obscure our judgment of the greatness of the issue. We see it mixed up with material interests and ambitions, more often as a negative and destructive phenomenon. That is how these things come. They put the fear of death into us first, before we realise that here is a challenge calling upon us to have more life. We are asked to live so vividly in our common humanity that common humanity everywhere becomes fully human—that is the challenge which in the next few lifetimes perhaps, must be accepted or refused.

JACK COMMON

THE BUDDHISM OF PAUL VALERY

[This is an excellent study from the pen of Dr. Ranjee G. Shahani—EDS.]

No modern French writer, except perhaps Victor Hugo, has enjoyed so great a fame during his own lifetime as Paul Valéry. Critics of various shades of opinion, of various countries and climes, have admitted, even when disagreeing with him most, that in him France has produced a poet of more than national significance. By general consent he is considered to be not only the most daring innovator of recent times but probably the finest intelligence that expresses itself in verse to-day. And this fame, this renown, of Valéry is by no means factitious. His achievements, looked at from any point of view, are solid and enduring. And, like all achievements of real value, they are novel, disturbing, exceedingly simple.

It is alien to my present purpose to attempt a considered estimate of Valéry's work in this essay. I wish to offer in the present instance an aspect of Valéry's thought—an aspect that relates him, however remotely, to Buddha. I do not want to suggest that there is conscious copying ; but that, by his own path, Valéry has reached more or less the same conclusions as Buddha. This is a matter of more than scholarly interest : it assumes the proportions of a problem. It confirms me in my private theory that all thinkers, in so far as they are honest with themselves and with the world, are necessarily Buddhists.*

Buddhist Turgenev ; Buddhist Nietzsche ; Buddhist Anatole France; Buddhist Thomas Hardy. But these were temperamental Buddhists. Valéry, like Bertrand Russell and Clifford Bax in their different ways, is a Buddhist by conviction—inner compulsion—the compulsion of thought leading to an inevitable conclusion. Not that Valéry, who is a *bon Européen,* would like to be called a Buddhist ; but whatever label he may attach to himself, the quality of his thought cannot be mistaken. It has only to be presented to be recognised. It has all the marks of Buddhist meditation. A few random examples would make this clear.

A problem that engaged the attention of Valéry at one time, and which he thought not only very difficult but of far-reaching importance, was " the study of the self for its own sake, the understanding of that attention itself, and the desire to trace clearly for oneself the nature of one's own existence." He soon realised that the problem was more complicated than that. It could be refined to a far greater extent than he had anticipated. What, for instance, endured within the ' self ' when all else was in perpetual flux ? Certainly not the body, nor the senses, which are weak and deceptive, nor the mind, which is a kaleidoscope of shifting images ; not even our personality, which is but an aggregate of disparate and often conflicting qualities (a Buddhist would call it a *confection*). Perhaps, beneath and behind all

* Mr. Middleton Murry, for example, is trying to find a Christianity that transcends Christianity. The fact is, he is groping after Buddhism.

these, there is *a something*—a something that can be reduced to consciousness pure and simple, or, better still, to an essence that is one with the ego—the central and centralising I. "This profound *tone* of our existence, as soon as it is heard, dominates all the complicated conditions and varieties of existence. To isolate this substantial attention from the strife or ordinary verities—is this not the ultimate and hidden task of the man with the greatest mind?" Just so. It was precisely the problem that engaged the attention of Buddha. At the very outset of his career, when his mission had scarcely begun, he was asked by his disciples whether he could tell them about a female thief. He told them: "What think you, gentlemen? Which is better for you: that you should be seeking after a woman, or that you should be seeking after the self?"* Again: "Self is the lord of self, who else could be the lord? With self well-subdued, a man finds a lord difficult to find."† The adventure that Valéry maps out for any thinker was exactly the adventure of Buddha.

But let us continue from Valéry. This is what he says in elaboration of the thought we have just been considering:

> The characteristic (I should say 'a') of man is consciousness; and that of consciousness is a perpetual emptying, a process of detachment without cease or exception from anything presented to it, whatever that thing may be. An inexhaustible act, independent of the quality as of the quantity of things that appear, an act by which the *intellectual man* must reduce himself, deliberately, to an infinite refusal to be anything.

Again:

> Everything yields before the pure universality, the insurmountable generality, that consciousness feels itself to be...It dares to consider its 'body' and its 'world' as almost arbitrary restrictions imposed upon the extent of its functions ..... and this attention to its external circumstances cannot react upon itself, so far has it drawn aside from all things, so great are the pains it has taken *never to be a part of anything it might conceive or do.* It is reduced to a black mass that absorbs all light and gives nothing back.

And again:

> Carried away by this ambition to be unique, guided by his ardour for omnipotence, the man of great mind has gone beyond all creations, all works, even his own lofty designs; while at the same time he has abandoned all tenderness for himself and all preferences for his own wishes. In an instant he annihilates his individuality.... To this point its pride has led the mind, and here pride is consumed. This directing pride abandons it, astonished, bare, infinitely simple, on the pole of its treasures.

This was the way, the path, that Valéry, after more than thirty years' silence proposed to his disciples! Poetry, like knowledge, he told them, was only a beginning. From this they were to proceed to the methods of poetry. Thence to methods in general, particularly the methods employed by the man of genius. After that to the universal self that determines all methods. Beyond that to mere consciousness, which is the only unchanging element in the Self. Having gone so far, and if still prepared to explore, they would discover that consciousness itself is an unending process of breaking away from all things, from all feeling and sensation.

* *Vinaya Texts*, I, p. 117.

† *Dhammapada*, XII, 120.

Then, still persevering, they will find the final truth :

> The man who is led by the demands of the indefatigable mind to this contact with living shadows and this extreme of pure presence, perceives himself as destitute and bare, reduced to the supreme poverty of being a force without an object...He exists without instincts, almost without images ; and he no longer has an aim. He resembles nothing. I say *man*, and I say *he*, by analogy and through lack of words.

Put in another way the supreme genius, according to Valéry, is one who has obtained freedom from the tyranny of the ego, *here and now*.

Now this perfected consciousness, which " differs from nothingness by the smallest possible of margins," is not merely an empty form. Like all verities that matter, it must manifest itself in a concrete being—a being who lives and suffers. Valéry gives us the apotheosis in a story called *An Evening with M. Teste*. M. Teste is a thinker, an absorbing personality. He does nothing, desires nothing, looks forward to nothing, is entirely apart from social convention. He contemplates mankind as if it did not exist. At night, when he is alone with himself, he is conscious of only three things : thought, insomnia, and pains in the head. (These conditions, we may notice in passing, are known to Buddhists as Avitchi, the Hell of Loneliness.)

In brief, Valéry seems to be saying through the mouth of M. Teste, that suffering is the only reality. This is the supreme discovery, according to Valéry, of the man with the greatest mind. What did the Buddha teach ?

Something infinitely more wonderful. He too said : " All existing things are involved in suffering."* But he did not stop there. He traced suffering to the root of Desire—Tanha and Trishna and Kama. And, proceeding further, he proclaimed the Third Truth—the ceasing of sorrow and suffering. He showed that not by pursuing earthly goods but by seeking the light of Nirvana could sorrow and suffering be overcome. The ' emptiness ' of which he spoke is not the emptiness that Valéry conceived. It is something far more real. " In one respect, one may call me a teacher of annihilation, because I teach the annihilation of greed, hatred and delusion, the annihilation of the manifold evil, unwholesome things. In this respect one may rightly say of me that I teach annihilation, and that for this purpose of annihilation I proclaim the Dhamma."†

This height Valéry has yet to scale. He is to Buddha what an acorn is to an oak. But the kinship is obvious.

RANJEE G. SHAHANI

* *The Dhammapada*, XX, 278.

† *Anguttara Nikaya*, VIII, 12.

THE SONG OF THE HIGHER LIFE

THE BRIGHT AND DARK POWERS

[Below we publish the seventeenth of a series of essays founded on the great text-book of Practical Occultism, the *Bhagavad-Gita*. Each of these discusses a title of one of the eighteen chapters of the Song Celestial. The writer calls them "Notes on the Chapter Titles of the Gita"—but they are more than notes. They bring a practical message born of study and experience.

This particular instalment is a study of the sixteenth chapter, which deals with the Bright and the Dark Powers.

Sri Krishna Prem is the name taken in the old traditional manner prevailing in India by a young English gentleman when he resolved to enter the path of Vairagya, renouncing his all, including the name given to him at birth. He took his tripos at Cambridge in Mental and Moral Sciences and is a deep student of Indian Philosophy. Away from the world but serving it with faith he lives in the Himalayas, and is esteemed highly for his sincerity, earnestness and devotion.—EDS.]

Literally translated, the title of this chapter would read "the division between the divine and demoniacal endowments," but such rendering suggests, to Western readers at least, a Miltonic dualism which is far from what is meant by the *Gita*. The word *deva* and its adjective, *daivi*, come from a root meaning "shining" while *asura*, though originally a title of Indra and other Vedic Gods, came to have the sense of "not-divine," hence "dark."

There are two natures in this world, the Bright and the Dark, and the purport of this chapter is to trace the differences between them. But the differentiation in question is not an arbitrary division into good and bad based on the will of some personal God or Teacher, but one which is rooted in the very nature of the Cosmic manifestation.

Mention has already been made of the two great tides or movements of the Cosmos, technically known as *pravritti* and *nivritti*. The former is the great out-going breath by which the universe comes forth from *Brahman*; the latter is the in-flowing counterpart by which all things return towards the One.

We must be on our guard against any introduction of ordinary ethical ideas in giving the names Bright and Dark to these two movements. The former is dark because it is characterised by an ever-increasing absorption of the Light within the forms, while the latter is bright because its tendency is towards the liberation of the Light. Such mental states as aid or manifest the out-going movement are also called dark and those that express the movement of return are termed bright.

This is the real basis of the ethical dualism that we find in the world. It is a great mistake, however, to set up an ethical dualism as absolute and then to rack one's brains to account for "the origin of evil." The dualism of the Cosmic Tides is inevitable in *any* universe whatever. It is no more possible to have a universe based on one movement alone than to have a

gun that will fire without a recoil. Action and reaction are the conditions of all manifestation and not even the great Machine of the Cosmos can escape the operation of this law.

Most so-called ethical science is an attempt to find some sort of reputable intellectual sanction for the prejudices and customs of the society in which the particular thinker has been born. Certain actions are labelled good ; others, for instance the appropriation of " some one else's " property, or certain forms of sexual behaviour, are termed evil. But this labelling not only raises the problem of why there should be evil in the universe, but also leads to the discovery that other societies in the world have no cognisance of these particular labels or even apply them in the opposite sense. Since, moreover, the universe as a whole, apart from supernaturalist assumptions, shows no sign of acting in accordance with the labels, the conclusion is reached that the universe is non-ethical and a further dualism between man and nature is set up so that the former finds himself in the unenviable position of being concerned with good and evil in a universe that is profoundly indifferent.

Such a conclusion is extremely unsatisfactory since it leaves man either a worshipper of the image that his own hands have made, one that he knows has no reality behind it, or else drives him into the arms of his own unregulated desires.

Our ethics must in fact be based upon the twofold Cosmic Movement and therefore must be relative. Buddhist philosophy speaks of two types of *kalpa* (period of manifestation) termed respectively *vivarta kalpas* or periods of " unrolling " and *samvarta kalpas* or periods of " rolling up " and when, on the eve of Enlightenment, the Buddha saw the whole series of His past lives, He remembered having lived through several of these alternate periods of evolution and involution. The universe is not then to be regarded as a perfectly straight unrolling followed by an equally straight rolling-up but as a cyclic process, spiralling downwards through many alternating ages and then re-ascending in the same spiral fashion.

From this it follows that, if ethics are to have any foundation in the Cosmos, we must define good and evil in terms of the processes that aid or hinder the cosmic tendencies that are dominant at the time, and these will be different according as the age we are living in is one of unrolling or one of rolling up. The qualities that are of assistance during an outgoing period of further descent into matter and which therefore must at that time be termed " good," are precisely the opposite of those which will be of use during a period of ascent or involution. Thus the virtues of the one period will become the vices of the other.

This ambiguity or relativity can be avoided by the use of the ethically neutral terms Bright and Dark, for they express simply the characteristics of the period in question without passing ethical judgment upon them.

Traces of this alternation of values have been preserved in Hindu mythology. We read in the

Puranas how, at certain early periods of the world, certain egos were entrusted with the work of generation of the species and ordered to produce offspring. They, however, refused to do so and became chaste ascetics, a course considered meritorious at other epochs, but here evidently considered a "sin" since we read that they were cursed in consequence of their refusal.

The reversal of meaning that came over the word *asura* is perhaps a further indication of the same sort. Originally, as has been said, the word was a title applied to the great Gods, *Varuna, Indra* and *Agni*—a sense which has been preserved in the *Ahura Mazda* of the Iranian tradition —but in later times it came to signify the "dark" enemies of the Gods. The same may be said of the process by which Lucifer, "Son of the Morning," whose very name of Light-bearer shows him to have represented the downward movement of the Light, became in later times the Christian Devil, the enemy of God and righteous men.

When we leave theory and come to practice we find ourselves at once confronted by the question how we are to know whether the period in which we are living is one of evolution or of involution. The answer is primarily to be found in our hearts which, reflecting as they do the whole of Cosmos, are able to know which tendency is operating at a given time. But that still small voice within us is reinforced by the words of the great spiritual Teachers of the epoch who, being Seers, teach in accordance with the voice of Cosmic Law.

Now it is noticeable that all the great Teachers of the historic epoch have inculcated an ethic of a definitely ascending or *nivritti* type. The ascending character of the ethics of the *Gita*, of Buddha, of Christ and of Shankara, is so obvious that we are apt to identify such teachings with ethics pure and simple and to assume that teachings of the opposite sort are evil for all time.

But there are definite indications that such a conclusion is erroneous. If we look back to the earliest cultures of which we have any historical knowledge, the civilisations of the five or six millennia preceding what we call our era, we see that the religions of those civilisations were of a fundamentally different type. I have written religions, but perhaps the singular would have been more appropriate, for, just as there is a certain uniformity about all modern religion, so there was a similarity between all the ancient religions.* Comparison of Babylonian, ancient Egyptian, or Cretan religion with the religions founded by "historical" Teachers shows that a fundamental difference of attitude prevailed in the ancient cults.†

There is in all of them an emphasis

* I am not referring to the thin stream of "mystery" tradition reserved for the few who, at all times, have been treading the upward Path but to the great exoteric cults designed for the masses of men.

† It would be easy to controvert this by the selection of appropriate instances but a sensitive study of the popular ancient religions will, I think, reveal profound *qualitative* differences of values and of general "atmosphere." Notice how D. H. Lawrence, for example, in revolt against accepted spiritual values was attracted to old-world cults such as that of the Etruscans. I notice also his worship of "dark Gods."

on *pravritti*, especially as manifested in the great forces of sex, and an inculcation of practices that seem to us of very dubious morality. The Great Mother was then the chief object of worship. To the type of religion represented by the *Gita* she has become the great World Tree that is to be cut down with the axe of non-attachment. It is easy to gloss over such a difference with talk of the evolution of man's religious sense but such a phrase only masks a real change in the values appropriate in the two epochs.

Orphic and kindred movements in Greece, "Hermeticism" in Egypt, Buddhism in India, and Christianity in the Near East and Europe were not simply religion *par excellence* coming into an irreligious world, but movements which came to initiate an age, and by reversing many previous values, directed the hearts of men along the path of *nivritti* which is the tendency at present ruling, not, indeed, in the sense that it yet dominates humanity, but in the sense that the values for the present epoch are the spiritualising ones of the ascent.

But it is time to return more directly to the *Gita*. The teaching about the bright and dark tendencies, which, like the *anabolic* and *katabolic* processes in the body, go on simultaneously in all ages, has been deferred till the disciple was at such an advanced stage of the Path, because the effect of such teaching upon immature souls is always to make them identify their own party with the bright and their opponents with the dark forces. They are themselves the "chosen people of God," while their opponents are the people of the Devil! Each of the nations fighting in the last war was, in its own opinion, fighting for Justice and the Right.

In studying the lists of bright and dark qualities enumerated in the *Gita* we should be careful to disinfect them somewhat of the atmosphere of "holiness" and "sinfulness" that centuries of popular ethical thinking has surrounded them with. *Dāna*, for instance, must be divested of its associations with almsgiving, charitable institutions and sanctimonious merit-mongering, while "study of the scriptures" (*swadhyāya*) has little connection with the Bible classes of the West or with the futile mechanical intoning of the *Gita* that is so popular in orthodox circles in India. *Dāna* is the process whereby the good things of the universe are made to circulate and penetrate the whole instead of being locked up in stagnant individual centres and is thus obviously a means of breaking down the barriers of egoism, while *Swadhyāya* signifies the pursuit of knowledge by study, not necessarily the study of "holy" books.

It is not necessary to go in detail into all the other qualities enumerated; all that is needed is to sound a warning against taking them in their conventional senses, for, in those senses, they often become vices, accorded lip-service by the great majority of men, but instinctively rebelled against in the heart. It is not without significance that the conventional virtues of the conventional saint are objects of dislike to healthy minded men. The task of thinking out the real meaning of

these qualities and of divesting them of the accumulated holiness of centuries is a useful and important exercise for the disciple of this Path. Only he who has made the attempt knows what valuable results it yields and what a profound ethical enlightenment comes from the discarding of the copy-book conceptions. Above all, the disciple will be cured of the almost universal habit of judging by appearances, for he will learn that apparently identical actions performed by two different men have very different values from the inner point of view.

It will be noticed that all the qualities which are described as bright are ones which help the liberation of the Light. In themselves, of course, they are qualities, not of the Light itself, but of the psycho-physical vehicles in which it is entangled ; but, just as it is easier to extract water from a sponge than from a brick, they are such as make it easier for the Light to detach itself and dominate those vehicles.

Thus, *ahinsa* (harmlessness) involves a checking of the outgoing forces of *rajas,* which, as we saw in connection with chapter fourteen, are what lead to the transformation of the unity-based love into a Nature " red in tooth and claw " and, worse, into man red with sword and bayonet. Similarly, *teja* (vigour) is the means of overcoming the *tamasik* drag which sinks the Light in the stagnant inertia of matter.

In dealing with the dark qualities, one difficulty appears at first sight. Contrary to what we should expect from the foregoing conclusions, a certain moral odium appears in the phrases which are used to describe them. " Dark " men are not even allowed to have a proper knowledge of *pravritti* which one might have thought was their special province. They are " ruined selves " (*nashtātmānah*), that is to say, those whose Light is sunk in matter, and they " come forth for the harming of the world."

But this condemnation is explicable when we reflect that the *Gita* is written for an epoch of *nivritti,** and that therefore the dark qualities described are not the outgoing (*pravritti*) tendencies in their own proper forms but, as it were, the aftermath of those qualities, the distorted and ugly forms in which they manifest themselves when prolonged beyond their proper time into an epoch of *nivritti.* They have the same relation to the qualities of pure *pravritti* that the sexuality of an old man has to the normal passion of youth.

The *pravritti* of a *nivritti* age is not the healthy and vigorous outgoing that it is in periods when it has the backing of the Cosmic Law but a sporadic, disruptive and harmful manifestation comparable to that unwanted cell-activity which produces the growth of tumours in an organism. That is why it is said that " dark " men (in an age of *nivritti*) " know neither right *pravritti* nor right *nivritti.*"

It is in that sense too that we must understand verse eight. " The universe, they say, is without truth,

* This is implied by Sri Krishna's assurance to Arjuna, the individual Soul, that he is born with the bright endowment, (verse 5)

without basis, without any Ruling Power, brought about by mutual union,* caused by lust and nothing else." Conscious as they are that their own activities are without any underlying harmony or truth and that they are motivated by sheer desire and have no sanction in the Cosmic Law, they naturally erect philosophies which deny the presence of those attributes in the Cosmos as a whole. We can see nothing in the universe which we have not first perceived in our own hearts and if a man's heart is given over to "insatiable desires" he will be able to see nothing in the Cosmos but the wild strife of untamed forces. Thus his lack of vision will seem to justify his self-indulgence and he will abandon himself to the gratification of his desires, "feeling sure that this is all."†

One particular consequence of this yielding to desires must be noted. We have seen that the forces of desire are not really personal forces seated in the Ego but great impersonal tides that sweep a man away. Just as a man experiences a rather fatuous sense of gratification and power when travelling at high speed in a motor car, even though that power and speed are no attributes of his, for he may be the merest weakling, so we experience an exhilaration in yielding ourselves to powerful currents of desire quite oblivious of the fact that they are neither us nor ours, but swirling tides that bear us to destruction.

A man need only examine himself when carried away by violent anger, passion or grief, to realise how much he is enjoying the swift rush and how reluctant he is to allow its luxurious ecstasy to come to an end. Although most (though apparently not all!) modern societies will not allow us to exult in the naïf fashion of verse fourteen over the enemies we have slain and are about to slay yet we can all recognise the desire-born thrill of the next verse: "I am wealthy, well-born; who is there that is like unto me? I will sacrifice, I will give alms, I will make merry. Thus, deluded by ignorance."

The ignorance in question is ignorance of the fact that the current of desire is something quite outside the Self, its exhilaration being that of the Gadarene swine as they "rushed down a steep place into the sea." For truly, the end of such wild careering is, as the *Gita* puts it, "in a foul hell." The fire and brimstone of the mediæval Christians and the ingenious tortures of sadistic hell-makers in India are mere superstitions, but, for all that, there are hells enough, both in this world and after death, the hells of unsatisfied desire which are entered by "the triple gate of lust, anger, and greed" (XVI. 21). Equally true is it that these hells are "destructive of the Self" for the Light of the Self is dissipated among the objects of desire.

In chapter eleven, verse thirty-six,

* In using the words "mutual union" the author was probably thinking of sexual union but words would apply equally to the theory that the world arose, in the last resort, from a "fortuitous concourse of atoms."

† It is not proposed to point a moral by applying these verses to current societies, East or West. Readers must judge for themselves whether or not they constitute an indictment of their particular society and whether the ways of their civilisation are "bright" or "dark."

we read of the *Rākshasas,* fleeing in fear to the uttermost boundaries of the universe. That was the cosmic aspect of the process and here (Verses 19, 20) we are told how the " dark " ones who are its actual embodiments turn from the Light within and are carried by the fierce currents of desire through birth after birth into the furthest abysses of materiality and Self-loss. For, once a Soul has attached itself to these currents, it is not easy for it to stop and reverse its course. " Easy is the descent into hell," as Virgil wrote ; it is the return that is difficult and laborious.

Yet it must always be remembered that, underlying all the moral indignation of the text, is the knowledge that those who follow the path of Darkness do so because they are those who have not yet plumbed the depths of matter, depths that those who love the Light have also plumbed before. The Soul Itself perishes never ; all movements, Dark and Bright, take place within the One and so from every depth there is return.

Before concluding this chapter it is necessary to say a few words about the last two verses, which, with their command to refer all matters to the authority of the *Shāstra,* have been and are the delight of orthodoxy. But to take *Shāstra* here as meaning the traditional scriptures—or any scriptures, in fact—is to misunderstand the whole tenor of the *Gita* with its reiterated counsel to take refuge in the *buddhi* (*e.g.*, Chapter II, v. 49) and its constant teaching that all knowledge is to be found in one's own heart.

The fact is that the word *Shāstra* here means the Threefold Ruler (*shāsaka traya*), the *manas* united with the *buddhi* and *mahat* or, in plain language, the inner knowledge that is revealed in the heart by the spiritual intuition. This is the meaning of the Upanishadic counsel to sink the senses in the mind, the mind in *buddhi,* and the *buddhi* in the *Mahān Ātman* or Great Self, and it is to these Inner Rulers that one should always submit. Following the dictates of that inner light, one should perform all actions in the world and he who ignores that inner Voice " to follow the promptings of desire, attains neither success nor happiness nor the highest Goal."

SRI KRISHNA PREM

THE PATH IS FOR WALKING, NOT FOR TALKING

[J. F. McKechnie explained to our readers why he tried to be a Buddhist in THE ARYAN PATH for June 1935. Here he stresses the value of doing, and not merely speaking, Buddhism or, for the matter of that, any religion.—EDS.]

The great difficulty that confronts the man who seeks to understand the world is himself. For what is "himself"? It is a little bit of individualised, apparently separate life—no harm in that fact, taken by itself. The harm comes in when—as happens almost universally—this little bit of life naïvely believes itself to be the whole of life and, as far as it can, acts accordingly.

This belief is the plague of the mind from which all but a very few suffer; and from it flow all the ills men encounter. It is so deep-seated as to be seemingly incurable. And it actually would be so were it not that the everyday experience of living sets a check upon it, and suggests the medicine for its cure. These checks and these hints at a curative agent are the inconveniences, annoyances and downright pains that inevitably are bound up with the existence of every living creature. For these untoward happenings are direct indications to each man that he is not the whole of life, but only one part, whose satisfaction is of slight importance in the totality of the happenings that constitute a universe.

But no man likes to learn this from experience. He revolts at it and does all he can to make believe that he has never heard such unwelcome information. None the less, it is absolute truth. The individual, as such, has no title to satisfaction for himself out of the universe. Yet in each individual the craving for some satisfaction refuses to be silenced.

He can get it in one way only. By one means or another he has to cease from, to break out of, his isolated consciousness as an individualised portion of life and become All-Life. And All-Life does not seek, because it does not need to seek, satisfaction. It is wholly satisfied at every moment. For it, each moment as it comes, is a complete expression of itself which requires no addition from any other moment's experience to make it perfect. At every moment it is itself, hence always full, complete, lacking nothing and therefore free from seeking anything, from craving anything; for there is nothing outside itself for it to seek or crave. When, therefore, a man makes himself one with this All-Life by ceasing from separated individual life, all his seeking and craving of necessity ceases. And that means that all his unhappiness ceases: he attains lasting felicity.

All this is very easy to put in words, and there lies the trap that catches far too many and holds them fast. For men learn with great facility to use phrases that set forth this truth, and are so satisfied with this

accomplishment that they attempt nothing further. They seem able to persuade themselves, incredible as it sounds, that to be able to talk well about the achievement of lasting felicity is the same thing as to have made it their own. A most strange error ! It is as though a man sitting by the roadside many miles from his destination should imagine that his having a map of the road to it, which he has studied till he knows all its details to perfection, is the same thing as being at that destination.

But the securing of the cessation of unhappiness is not a word or a set of words ; it is a deed, the very greatest of deeds. One may use words about it, but only as a preparation for doing something. By themselves, words are nothing at all. Two steps actually trodden along the road bring a man two steps nearer the achievement. Two million words about it do not bring a man one inch towards it. After the words are spoken, he is just as far from the goal as before. Emitted breath does nothing whatever to move a human body forward in space ; a forward movement of the feet does.

Hence it comes that one great religious Teacher called his teaching just a Path. A path is something to be walked on : it has no other use. To provide men with a pleasant subject for discussion in a leisure hour was not in the very least the object of its discoverer when he pointed it out to men. In this twenty-fifth century after His earthly day, we can easily picture the Buddha's astonishment at finding some men using his Path only as something on which to hold comfortable converse in agreeable little gatherings, private or public, not allowing anything He said to discommode them in their daily lives or put them to too much inconvenience ; in other words, being content just to talk about His teaching, and actually practising only such parts as do not cost them overmuch trouble to follow.

Other religious teachers have suffered the same fate at the hands of those who call themselves their followers but in truth ought to be called only their admirers—at a safe distance ! Has not the time come when we should talk less about the obligations of religion and begin to make some attempt actually to fulfil them ? Talk in this domain, which should be only a preliminary to doing, is so likely to become a substitute for it, and is actually becoming such for myriads of men. And thus, tragically enough, for many who imagine that they are making progress towards the ending of infelicity, that goal remains as far away as ever, and will so remain despite all their talk until they begin to take steps in very deed towards it. Taking such actual steps, something is done to shorten the distance between themselves and that goal, be it only by a little. But only talking about it, however beautifully or volubly, will get them nowhere.

J. F. McKechnie

NEW BOOKS AND OLD

A BOOK WITH A MESSAGE*

Indians and lovers of India will greet this volume with enthusiasm and salute its author with gratitude.

First and foremost, these nine essays justify the claim, so often made by devotees of spiritual India and as often rejected with silent derision or vociferous argumentation by her opponents, that the heart-beats of India sing the rhythm of Soul and Deity. These heart-beats are better heard in the hundreds of thousands of villages than in the cities, most of which are enveloped by the clouds of hybrid habits and of Eurasian mentality. The big problem of the Indian city of to-day is to disperse these ugly clouds : handsome Indian bodies are cribbed in ugly woolen suits and the graceful dhoti is discarded for the meritless pantaloons, and round the neck is the noose of the cheap tie; and insult is added to injury when pure white khadi is cut to the western patterns ; the limit is reached when " a pure patriot " thus clad, adorning his head with a Gandhi cap, struts the roads poisoning the air with the stench of tobacco ! This outer garb speaks eloquently of other more objectionable habits which some of these intellectual Eurasians adopt—eating meats, drinking intoxicants, and indulging in other vices. Such mental and moral Eurasians cannot be the true spiritual servants of Mother India, whatever outward service they may render Her. For all such this book has a message. Some of them may peruse it ; some may even use it in shouting their patriotism at huge political meetings ; but how many will make a practical application of its message, give up their Eurasian habits and become in appearance as in daily conduct what they are by Karma, Indians, sons of the Great Mother ? And what about the daughters of India in such cities as Allahabad, Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, and even Bangalore where the book is published ? For these daughters also there is a message—along lines similar to those in which the book addresses their brothers.

Our friend Sjt. Masti Venkatesa Iyengar has rendered a distinct service in showing, in an unmistakable manner, that at heart the popular culture of India is unsectarian and dynamic, and springs from pure spirituality. While his volume deals with Karnataka only, it will be found to be true of the other linguistic areas as well. This is clearly recognized by its author who states in the Preface : " It is perhaps unnecessary but it might be just as well to say that no claim is advanced that the popular culture of the Karnataka is separate or different from the popular culture of other parts of India. The ruling ideas of nearly the whole of India on essential topics relating to life are more or less

* *Popular Culture in Karnataka.* By MASTI VENKATESA IYENGAR. Satya Sodhana Pustaka Bhandara, Bangalore City. Rs. 2-8-0.

the same." But each of these other areas must produce an Indian actuated by the motive and energized by the zeal to seek and to find pure currents of cultural life, motive and zeal which the author of this volume possesses. He has gone about his task with eyes open and ears attentive, and with discrimination has evaluated the songs and stories, the proverbs and aphorisms of Karnataka he loves. His praise for the good aspects of the culture is not expressed in mere words, but is demonstrated—*i.e.*, he allows those aspects to speak for themselves, while he does not hesitate in referring to those " parts of that culture that are not so edifying." " Karnataka culture to-day, like all Indian culture, shows the lowest forms of animism in juxtaposition with high philosophy and mysticism." No village worker should be without a copy of this book. We fully agree with Sjt. Masti Venkatesa Iyengar when he writes : " When the country begins to take a full view of its life and to build again it will find ready to hand the basis of a culture which essentially is neither mean nor ignoble."

Besides its message with a political implication and significance the book has great literary charm. Written in English, a foreign tongue, it has innumerable turns of phrase and idiom, which must have been borrowed from the mother-language, and which make its perusal very attractive. Besides its literary form, there is substance in the book : it is the offspring of research and of thought. The culture of Karnataka arising from the people who have lived, laboured, loved and left behind their influence when they passed through the door of death is vital—in the process of growing like a healthy tree. This volume is a most excellent guide and offers a historical background without a knowledge of which a proper appreciation of what is taking place in the literature of the province to-day is not possible. In this historical background we discern how spiritual men endeavouring to break the fetters of sect and of dogma, fired by devotion and aspiration, produced poems and proverbs. While we cannot help admiring the literature they unconsciously created, we must not overlook the fact that the real spring and source of that creation was the quest of Spirit—indivisible, universal, impersonal.

The book has, therefore, a very helpful message for the aspirant to Soul-life in the India of to-day. The sayings and stories with which the volume is interspersed are of value to the practitioner of yoga. There is much wisdom not only to be read, with nods of approval or of condescension, but to be taken to heart, used in self-examination and applied in day-to-day living.

The Newer Alchemy. By LORD RUTHERFORD, O.M., F.R.S. (Cambridge University Press. 3*s*. 6*d*.)

" And this question of transmutation," wrote H. P. Blavatsky, " is it so absurd as to be totally unworthy of consideration in this age of chemical discovery ? " She wrote at a time when to express a belief in the age-old tenet of the alchemists was to expose oneself to the pitying contempt of the orthodox

scientific world. Atoms were uncreatable, indestructible and indivisible; each element had its own peculiar variety of atom, fixed in the remote genesis of the universe, and unchanging to its furthest end. How then could transmutation be anything but the fantastic dream of undisciplined imagination? But Blavatsky had courage as well as insight, and her faith was well founded: transmutation of the elements is to-day a commonplace operation of the physical laboratory, and though as yet it can be effected upon only extremely minute quantities, we may anticipate the time when the working load will be measured in tons rather than in infinitesimal units. To explain how alchemy has at length justified itself, there is no man better fitted than Lord Rutherford, for it is he who, following the trail blazed by his illustrious predecessor, the present Master of Trinity, has done more than any other individual to solve a problem which nineteenth-century science declared insoluble. In this little book the gist of the matter is expounded with admirable lucidity, so that even the non-scientific reader will be able to follow the modern alchemists in their laboratories. What does it matter that, at present, gold can be made only from more expensive metals? The important point is that gold can be made: the "question" is not "so absurd."

E. J. HOLMYARD

Half-caste. By CEDRIC DOVER. (Martin Secker and Warburg Ltd., London. 10*s.* 6*d.*)

This is an indispensable volume on racial questions. We may agree with the author that "To-day there are no half-castes because there are no full castes," and understand the extent of miscegenation and its importance in cultural diffusion, without subscribing to the bases of his general argument. If we are to look upon man as very probably "a fœtalised ape produced by severe iodine-deficiency" (Marett), there is no reason why we should not go further and consider the problem of miscegenation, as does Mr. Dover, as "a world issue created by Western Protestantism and capitalist democracy." We may agree with his dictum that colour and economic success are not "indices of desirability," without sharing his pronounced socialistic theories, or finding it "impossible to visualise the victory of reason, the abrogation of selfishness and privilege, within the structure of capitalist society." If "man" is merely an animal endowed with intelligence (sometimes), why complain of the supremacy of brute force? The vision of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, "without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or colour," far antedates Karl Marx. But its objective realisation is dependent upon acceptance of a very different philosophical outlook from that adumbrated by the modern school of economic biologists. We need to understand the structure of Man before attempting to disentangle the confusing issues of the structure of Society. Starting from the basic postulate of a "reincarnating Monad," we may hope to realise that application of the principles of Universal Unity and Causation, Human Solidarity, the Law of Karma, and Reincarnation, alone can bind humanity into one family.

None the less, we feel grateful to Mr. Dover for amassing a wealth of material which will prove salutary in its effect upon those good people who too often use the conception of Brotherhood as a cloak to hide the paucity of their ideas upon practical racial questions. We appreciate, too, Professor Hogben's remark in his preface:

> With full responsibility for my words as a professional biologist, I do not hesitate to say that all existing and genuine scientific knowledge about the way in which the physical characteristics of human communities are related to their cultural capabilities can be written out on the back of a postage stamp.

There is an invaluable bibliography.

B. P. HOWELL

Plato To-day. By R. H. S. CROSSMAN. (George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., London. 7*s.* 6*d.*)

This is a very stimulating book, and more, I have to confess that I, nurtured in pre-war Oxford, was one of those who read Plato's *Republic* in the rosy light of the Liberal idealism which was second nature to young Englishmen twenty-five years ago. Mr. Crossman has convinced me that Plato's devastating criticism of Greek democracy, and his pattern of the "totalitarian" city-state, were practically meant. As far as I can judge, he does not strain Plato's intention at any point in presenting him as the critic of contemporary democracy. Yet Mr. Crossman remains a democrat.

It would be interesting to compare in some detail Mr. Crossman's book with Señor de Madariaga's *Anarchy or Hierarchy*, since Madariaga is a contemporary who has undergone the Platonic disillusion, and taken refuge in the Platonic illusion. For the Platonic idea of a dictatorship of wise men, submitting to intense physical and spiritual discipline, imposing their righteous will, through a body of administrators, on the undiscriminating mass, *is* an illusion. But what is, in itself, regarded positively, an illusion, may be a powerful and necessary cathartic when applied as criticism.

For it seems to me, as it seems to Mr. Crossman, that European democracy is failing at the test. "Democracy, in fact," as Mr. Crossman says, "has lost belief in itself, and become an inert instead of a dynamic force in world-affairs.... Unlike our opponents, we are uncertain what the democracy is for which we stand." It is just at this point that Mr. Crossman appears to me undecided. He sees, quite plainly, that modern democracy, if it is not to disintegrate, must believe in itself, have faith in its own idea—faith of the kind that does not shrink from complete self-sacrifice. There are two choices before the real democrat in the world to-day—the armed defence of democracy, or an absolute and completely self-sacrificial non-violence. Between those two alternatives the finest minds in England are torn to-day. I think that Mr. Crossman's mind is one of these. He says :—

> True democracy is un-Platonic, because it springs from the Christian notion of personality ; and it is only if we believe in this notion that we can refute Plato and show that his philosophy has no sufficient message for the modern world...For this reason, as the true democrat must start with the assumption that the world has still to be made democratic, so the Christian must assume that it is still pagan, despite the existence of "democratic" institutions and "Christian" churches. Only a revolutionary democracy and a revolutionary Christianity can hope to prevail to-day. Institutionalism will kill them both... For fundamentally both are assertions of *incredibles*. Against the realism of those who accept the existing order and seek to maintain it, they preach an impossibility and try to make it come true. The true democrat and the true Christian admit the Platonic analysis of man as he is, but they know that they can change him by their faith in man as he ought to be.

I would not ask for a better statement of my own faith than that. But I have come to believe that it is impossible to assert that faith by modern warfare. Mr. Crossman has not come to that point. He is, quite rightly, sceptical of the inward quality of much English "pacifism." "The ordinary Englishman," he says quite truly, "is not at the present prepared to die for anything really important, least of all for democracy." But I believe that that ill condition is due, at least in part, to the fact that he does not see how he can die *for democracy*. The flower of young English manhood died "for democracy" in 1914. The disillusion was bitter. To-day their brothers try to die for democracy in Spain. But that is no real solution of the problem. It seems to me that the only way to die for democracy to-day is to refuse to fight for it, and take the consequences, even to the bitter end.

JOHN MIDDLETON MURRY

The Destiny of Man. By NICOLAS BERDYAEV. (Translated from the Russian by Natalie Duddington, M.A. Geoffrey Bles, London. 16s.)

It may be that in the life of the soul it reaches an incarnation in the course of which certain intimations of the inner wisdom are accepted by the intelligence. The actual process of these communications is not realised by the subject, who has neither mystical visions nor ecstasies, and does not lead an ascetic life. But without any intellectual awareness of the source of origin, he finds himself more ready to accept certain assumptions as the basis of his philosophy and beliefs, such assumptions coming to him with an effect of discovery and differing in essentials from the commonly accepted religious dogmas of his own times. Plato might be cited as an instance of this phase of development, and I find another in Nicolas Berdyaev.

The Destiny of Man, the third of his major works to be translated into English, goes further towards a rediscovery of certain aspects of the Ancient Divine Wisdom than either *Freedom and the Spirit* or *The Meaning of History.* He is a man of great scholarship, but his reading does not appear to have been influenced by the Eastern Scriptures, a fact that upholds the general presumption I maintained in my article on the writings of Jacob Boehme, namely that the great accomplishment of the mystics is the correspondence that they discover one with another in every age. The expression may be personal, but the fundamental truths are the same.

Berdyaev's faith is characteristically Christian, and *Freedom and the Spirit* was warmly acclaimed by orthodox Churchmen. They may, also, applaud *The Destiny of Man,* adopting the letter and neglecting the spirit as they do in their reading of the Gospels. Yet in both cases, the esoteric truths are unmistakable to those whose submission to dogmatic religion has not paralysed their power of choice. Here, for example, is Berdyaev's reasoned approach to the doctrine of reincarnation, certainly unacceptable to the churches but essential to his main thesis. He writes :

> The Christian view does not make clear the mystery of the genesis of the soul. The presence of the eternal element in the soul means eternity not only in the future but in the past as well. That which has an origin in time cannot inherit eternity..... Our natural earthly life is but a moment in the process which takes place in the spiritual world. This leads to the recognition of pre-existence in the spiritual world, which does not by any means involve reincarnation on earth.

The last sentence confesses a limitation common to the type I postulated in my first paragraph. It may be that in such as these the liaison between mind and spirit can never approach the intimacy necessary to the realisation of the stages of soul-wisdom. And what follows the passage quoted, on Hell, Paradise and Beyond Good and Evil, does nothing to elucidate the mystery of spiritual progress after the death of the temporary physical instrument. It is not, however, in these aspects of belief that we find the chief values of Berdyaev's writings, but in his insistence on the need for complete personal responsibility with regard to what the churches call "salvation." It is quite obvious that the "Vicarious Sacrifice" means nothing more to him than an object lesson, and he inveighs again and again against what he calls the "commonplace smugness" that arises from "herd-morality", for, as he says on a later page, "It is perfectly clear that the herd-man has adopted the Gospel truth to suit his own ends."

The most important principle for Berdyaev is that "Redemption is only completed through creativeness," which he states as "the fundamental conception of new ethics." The acceptance of teaching from without, succeeded by its crystallisation into dogma and an acceptable rule of life, is the manner in which all living truths become debased into the pattern of the herd-morality that for him as for Nietzsche is so prominent an aspect of the failure of the Christian religion. In place of such

acceptance, he demands a creative morality, the expression of a personal ethic, deriving from the exercise and development of the creative imagination—a principle that informs his doctrine throughout.

Space does not permit any further elaboration of Berdyaev's examination of these "new ethics" or his application of them to what he regards as a "new morality". But enough has been indicated to justify my description of him as an "intellectual mystic", one of those clear-minded men who on their own plane of thought rediscover in themselves a few glimpses of the eternal truths which proceed from the oldest religion in the world. Like all such,—and I might count myself among them,—he is unable to reach a stage at which the objective approval of principles by the reasoning mind is merged in a realisation that pervades the whole self. Nevertheless, he is so certainly on the right path, that *The Destiny of Man* is a book that can confidently be recommended to those who seek to approach the eternal mysteries by the imperfect instrument of reason.

J. D. BERESFORD

Julian the Apostate and the Rise of Christianity. By F. A. RIDLEY. (Watts and Co., London. 15*s*.)

Mr. Ridley has written an interesting and original but finally a disappointing book. He outlines first the development of the Roman Empire through successive "fascist" phases to culminate in the Byzantine totalitarian state of the fourth century, shows the necessity, in a decaying civilization, that God and Government should be at one, and tells how, between a fairly evenly balanced paganism and Christianity, the state-choice fell upon the latter. The Emperor Julian sought to reverse that choice and to restore paganism, and Mr. Ridley puts it as the book's central thesis that the effort was a wholly possible one and would almost certainly have succeeded but for Julian's almost immediate death in battle at the age of only thirty-one. Even that, Mr. Ridley admits, could not have saved the Empire from the barbarians, but he does believe that without the repressive intolerance of organised Christianity, the Dark Ages would have been cut short and the recovery of European civilization have taken place centuries earlier.

The conception is carefully and consistently worked out, and has in fact not a little to recommend it, but a subtle wrongness is introduced at the beginning and sustained throughout by the narrow view of Julian both as champion of "European civilization against oriental invasion," and as a Rationalist almost in the narrow modern meaning of that term. "His belief in the gods was, mainly at least, symbolic in character. That he was an idealist in philosophy is true; positive science had not then nearly reached the point of an exact knowledge, *where Materialism and good sense became inseparable*."

The words here italicised make Mr. Ridley's position quite clear. It is one which compels him to misread Julian almost entirely, seeing him not as the great initiate he was into the profounder religious "mysteries," for whose broader vision the limitations of materially triumphant Christianity were indeed a prison, but rather as a potential member of some modern Rationalist Association, mere by-product of the even narrower self-assurance of nineteenth-century science. The view of Julian's Neoplatonism as distinctively "Hellenistic" and "European" is also quite untenable, as is its identification with the "dignified" monotheism ascribed to his pagan contemporaries. Mr. Ridley's main theme is right and he says many good things. The triumph of Christianity over the theosophical Julian probably was a disaster for Europe. But less of a disaster than the triumph of the narrow materialism as whose champion he is so strangely envisioned here!

GEOFFREY WEST

Christianity, Communism and the Ideal Society. By JAMES FEIBLEMAN (George Allen and Unwin Ltd., London. 12*s.* 6*d.*)

It is refreshing, and, one hopes, symptomatic, to find a philosophical treatise which not only advocates, but illustrates as well, a pronounced detachment in surveying the constitution of the social system in which we are obliged to live.

We have been submerged of late by a multitude of political and economic manuals, mostly violently *parti pris* in character, which assure us, in accents ranging from the suave to the ferocious, that the mouthing of some particular slogan and the following of some particular leader is the only panacea for our manifold social and economic ills.

Mr. Feibleman will have none of this hysteria. He is concerned in this admirable piece of dialectic, to show how the whole course of our civilisation has been changed by a too close adherence to that philosophical system which, borrowing a definition from medieval thought, he terms "nominalistic." This bondage has, he holds, invalidated not only a great deal of subsequent philosophising, but also has infected most of our recent moral and intellectual activities with the taint of unreality.

The author confesses himself a firm partisan of the opposite camp of Realism, whose devotees hold that absolute truth exists quite apart from our interest and belief in it. Plato is for him the *fons et origo* of philosophical integrity, and error has walked the land since thinkers forsook the teaching of the greatest of the Greeks for various kinds of false dichotomy.

He traces the trouble to Aristotle and his obsession with an articulated "scientific" observation. After him came Aquinas, who made confusion even worse confounded; for he postulated anthropomorphism, which is indefensible, and he formulated the theological tenets of a system which has neglected actuality because of its rigid and extreme dogmatism.

In his survey of more recent developments of the European consciousness Mr. Feibleman sees the same disintegration at work. The fallacy of democracy is seen to lie in the supposition that governments which have no reality and consequently no authority are adequate to fulfil the function of government. The fallacy of dialectal materialism lies in the slavery of its professors to the empirical findings of nineteenth-century physics and biology.

So we come to suggestions for a cure. The author has no immediate remedy to offer, but he gives us instead a new humility and a new hope. His theory of the independent reason recalls to us Plato's famous distinction between Knowledge and Opinion. We live in a world of infinitely expanding mental and physical possibilities. Let us not cramp and limit our prospects of freedom by accepting with too glib a readiness postulates based not on truth but on a merely human itch for change.

BERNARD BROMAGE

The Yoga Vasishtha. By HARI PRASAD SHASTRI. (The Favil Press, London. 3*s.*)

Hari Prasad Shastri has rendered useful service in presenting us with this translation of the *Yoga Vasishtha*, the story of Queen Chudala and the Sermons of the Holy Vasishtha.

Given to the world long ages ago this volume teems with all that is most beautiful in religious idealism and is full of sound philosophy which has its lessons for the modern world even though its teachings may appear at first glance to be so remote from it.

The *Yoga Vasishtha* will probably appeal to only a small circle for the philosophy of ancient India has little in common with the spirit of modern civilization. To-day thousands of men and women are clinging to the belief that the way to happiness lies in the quest for power, wealth and fame. The *Yoga Vasishtha* teaches otherwise. Again and again in language that is both pictur-

esque and simple the folly of this doctrine is made clear. Turning over its pages one is reminded of that significant passage from *The Udanavarga* :—" From desires comes grief, from grief comes fear, he who is free from desire knows neither grief nor fear." This expresses the keynote of this book. " Of what avail are wealth, comeliness, fame or power without knowledge of truth. Devote yourself to learning and consider well your riches to be but trash and bubbles."

Reading through its pages one observes that link which unites all schools of religious idealism. At times one can imagine almost that it is *The Zohar* of the Hebrews that lies before us by reason of the similarity of opinion that is expressed.

Within the pages of the *Yoga Vasishtha,* however, will be found nothing that is new for it is an old, old message that it proclaims once more. It is the lesson that the world must learn if sorrow's cause is to be overcome.

Every one who loves the philosophy of the Orient should dip into the pages of this book. The stories and fables that it contains, the instructions of the Sage to his pupil Prince Ram will appeal to all who have reasoning minds. Their perusal will do much towards an understanding of the wide popularity the *Yoga Vasishtha* has had always with the Himalayan monks. It may help us, too, to realise how different the world would be if there was general recognition of the simple instruction of the Sage, " Unless the good of all becomes your good, Ram, you will only add fetters to your feet."

The *Yoga Vasishtha* shows us how—you, I and the world may free ourselves of our fetters !

ARTHUR PEACOCK

The Roots of Evil. By the Hon. EDWARD CADOGAN, C.B. (John Murray, London. 9*s.*)

There is a complacency peculiar to some types of historian, who, conscious of the many unpleasant practices of earlier ages, ignore the less glaring but no less unpleasant evils of our own age. Because we no longer hang malefactors publicly on Tyburn Tree, because our sailors no longer die off like flies from scurvy, because our M. P.s no longer hold boroughs in their pockets, our enlightenment is taken for granted.

> " If you glance at History's pages,
> In all lands and eras known,
> You will find the buried ages
> Far more wicked than our own..."

That spirit still rings resoundingly in our day, in spite of Guernica and the Indian Civil Service.

A similar complacency, less pronounced, detracts from the value of Mr. Cadogan's treatise on the development of penal methods through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Phrases like ' we who live in an age of clemency ' and ' our enlightened times ' forewarn one to distrust his conclusions ; but against that one must acknowledge that his thorough research has brought to light many interesting facts from which the reader can draw his own conclusions. A vivid description of eighteenth century London illustrates the relation between crime and social organisation. When London streets were narrow, crooked and unlighted, footpads were an ever-present menace to the pedestrian. Street widening and straightening, and later the introduction of general street lighting, made this crime almost unknown by the end of the nineteenth century. *Thus the wiser organisation of society has effected a cure that no repressive measures were able to bring about.* The punishment of individual criminals is not only ineffective—it is a symptom of social chaos.

A chapter on the prisons of the eighteenth century gives Mr. Cadogan an opportunity to wax indignant about the unenlightenment of those times. Yet really there are no grounds for complacency. Howard's *State of the Prisons* and Eden's *State of the Poor* contain very similar descriptions, which shew that the poor man who took to crime did not find himself wholly unprepared for prison

when his time came. But the prisons of to-day have no relation to the civic world. They are hygienic, but they are divorced from social circumstances. The prisoner has to adjust himself to an arbitrary, separate world. He has less chance of adjusting himself to the outer world than any of Howard's prisoners.

Underlying Mr. Cadogan's attitude to penal reform is the concept of the criminal as an unruly person rebelling against social organisation. He is lenient about it ; but, although his facts continually force it on the reader, he himself never once recognises that the *criminal is but the dramatic expression of a disordered community.* This leads him to place undue emphasis on personalities as they appear in his story. Eighteenth century disorders are attributed out of hand to Robert Walpole ; the failure of the early attempts to form a police force is saddled on Jonathan Wild. Nevertheless the same exaggerations produce lively and readable portraits. If you are interested in the history of penal methods, and have time to analyse a well ordered and instructive mass of information, you will find this book useful. Reproductions of a number of well chosen contemporary drawings mark the transit of the centuries.

MARK BENNEY

Religion in Transition. By S. RADHAKRISHNAN, C. F. ANDREWS, GEORGE A. COE, ALFRED LOISY, JAMES H. LEUBA, EDWIN D. STARBUCK. (George Allen and Unwin Ltd., London. 7*s.* 6*d.*)

> As oil in sesame seeds, as butter in cream,
> As water in river-beds, and as fire in the friction-sticks,
> So is the Atman apprehended in one's own soul,
> If one looks for it with true tapas.

Any progressive transition of religion must tend toward a return to the Upanishadic conception of universality and the immanence of Spirit. However varied religious experience, behind all religious expression is the Universal Mother from whom we have wandered far, but who, despite our faithlessness, awaits our return with never doubting heart. Neither arid intellectualism nor dreary moralizing leads us to her holy seat. In the clouds of moist sentimentality we shall wander far from the path. Unfortunately, religious expression follows life whereas our lives should be an expression of religion. Hence our dilemma. Only those with the courage of their *own* convictions, who have broken the fetters of belief and chewed away their tags of religious sectarianism can reach the goal.

Religion like science must be eclectic. It must know no creed, no dogma, no separative feeling of exclusive superiority, no favour. It knows but LAW. No study purporting to encompass Religion in transition should confine its interest to one out of the world's many faiths. What would we say of the doctor who concentrated his interest on the liver or the brain to the exclusion of the rest of the body? Yet here we have a book mostly of "Christian" specialists. Its title is misleading.

Only Radhakrishnan, the Hindu, and Alfred Loisy, regard Christianity as one of many rays of coloured light from the White Light of Truth behind the Veil. Andrews catches beatific visions in fogs of emotion where the curious catch the germ of enquiry, while Starbuck follows the methods of fallacious reasoning. Coe finds no answers to the problem of war, class struggle, etc., in "our inherited ethical principles." Religion has failed. "It is time for us to humble ourselves and take the attitude of learners." Leuba subjects the mystic's experience to scientific analysis and condemns traditional religious methods as dangerous.

The essence of the book is in the essays of Radhakrishnan and Loisy. Their reasoning and spiritual vision are inspiring and are fraught with hope. This reviewer is both saddened and astonished that no mention is made of Theosophy, the greatest revolutionary force in religious, scientific and philosophic thought in our era.

D. C. T.

ENDS AND SAYINGS

Though one of the smallest communities living, the Parsis are divided into three groups if the usage of calendar is to be taken into account. They have three calendars: one group celebrates its New Year on the 21st of March, the second on a varying day in August, this year on the 7th, and the third, comprising the largest group, on a varying day a month later, this year on the 6th of September.

We cull a few statements from the Zoroastrian ethical texts indicative of the practical morality which the creed emphasises. Only torn fragments of the original teachings are now available and to have a real insight into the existing beliefs and customs of the Parsis it must be borne in mind that their existing religious lore covers a vast period during which evolution of no less than four languages—Avesta, Pahlavi, Pazand, and Persian—has taken place. One has to seek from the Avestan Gathas to the Persian Revayats—this is like a vast territory in which there are rich mines of thought, arid deserts of superstitions, and choking miasmic tracts of corruptions.

O men! Understand the Law of Ahura Mazda; it is this: for the wicked and the sinner the wounds which pain for a long time; for the righteous due compensation, through which happiness is experienced. (*Yasna* xxx. 11)

Purity is the highest good for man, from his very birth. O Zarathushtra, that Purity is sustained by the Law of Mazda. Any person can purify himself by good thoughts, good words and good deeds. (*Vendidad* v. 21)

Through Wisdom the world of Righteousness is emanated. Through Wisdom every evil is subjugated. Through Wisdom every good is perfected. (*Dadistani-Dinik*)

Whosoever drives out the Druj (Evil) from his person is a ruler, a kingly soul. (*Dinkard* vi. p. 395)

When your hidden passion which inflames the body will depart from it; and when the evil spirit in you reaches to ruin; then only will be your recompense in this Maga—the Great Cause. Gird up your loins for the great War; otherwise at the end will you cry "Alas! Alas!" (*Yasna* liii. 7)

Every disaster which springs up he is to trace to Ahriman and his host; he is not to seek his own welfare through the injury of any one; thus he becomes compassionate as regards all the creatures of Ahura Mazda. In duty and good work he is diligent and persistent..... For Renouncing Sin the special thing is this, that one commits no sin voluntarily; and if through folly, or weakness and ignorance, a sin occurs, he should then renounce that sin by approaching the high-priest who is his good soul; and after that when he refrains from that sin, having learnt its lesson, that sin is swept away from him, just as the wind, fast and strong, sweeping over the plains carries away every single blade of grass and anything that is not rooted in the soil.

Dina-i-Maninog-i-Khirad (lii)

Be it known that the characteristics of real Wisdom are Peaceful heart, True speech, Cheerful disposition, Sincerity, Amity and Generosity. (*Dinkard* viii. p. 398)

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